23 Hot Reviews
including... *Fallout 2* • *Heretic II* • *Blood II*
Railroad Tycoon II and the latest hardware

The Readers' 50 Best Games Ever
The surprise results of our biggest-ever survey will SHOCK you!

Voodoo3 Unveiled! But...
...is 3Dfx making a mistake with its fastest-ever accelerator?

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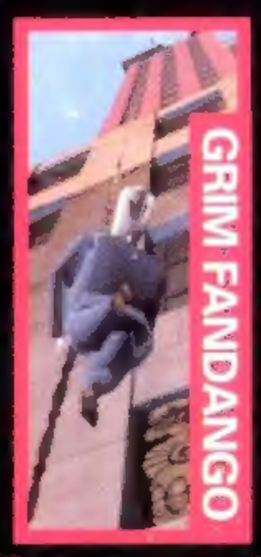

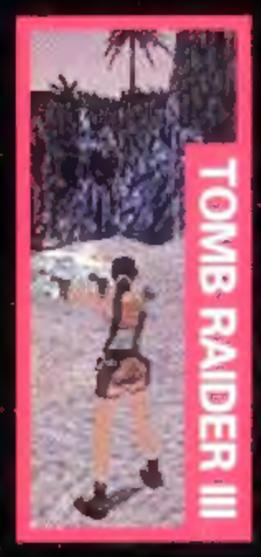

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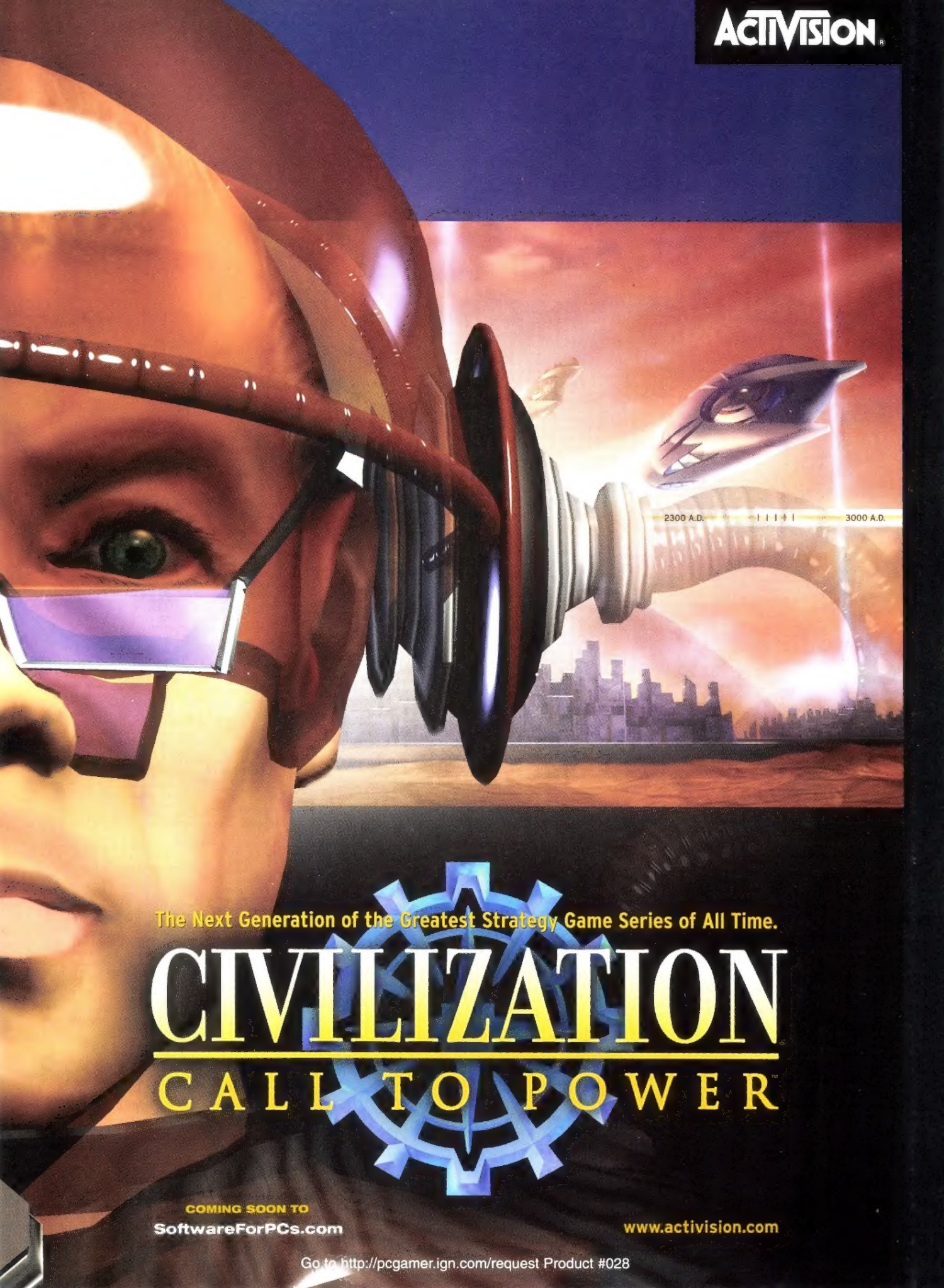

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PC GAMER
VOLUME 6 • NUMBER 2 • FEBRUARY 1999

Cover Story

This past Holiday season saw an influx of great games, and to help you get through them all with your sanity intact, we once again bring you our annual Ultimate Strategy Guide. Packed to the brim with 46 pages of the best hints, tips, walkthroughs, and cheats you'll find anywhere, consider it our post-Holiday gift to you. 62

THE ultimate 1999 STRATEGY guide

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Feature

The PC Gamer Readers' Top 50

We gave you, our readers, the chance to speak up about *your* choices for the best 50 games of all time, and you sure weren't shy. The results were rather interesting, but at least it proves something that we've always known — our readers have good taste! 164

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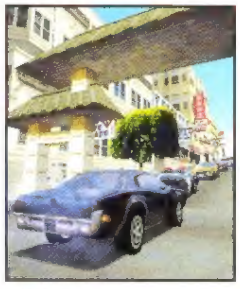

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Driver takes all that was great about *Grand Theft Auto* and puts it into a more immersive 3D environment.

Rayman 2 36

This sequel sees our engaging hero, Rayman, traversing a 3D world loaded with hot visuals and involving gameplay.

Braveheart 40

Eidos merged this medieval real-time strategy game with a hot movie license, and the results are impressive.

http://pc.ign.com

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227 The Hard Stuff

You knew it was coming, and we've got the latest news on 3Dfx's next generation of hardware — Voodoo3. We also look at one of the first truly practical USB peripherals, as well as a host of other hardware sure to put you in the upgrading mood.

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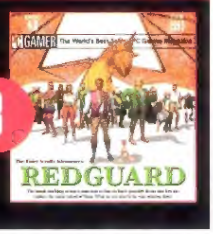
Disc Pages

Never fear — the disc pages are here to help you play the demos on the best CD in the business!



Departments

47 Eyewitness
Three sweet-looking titles from Chris Roberts' new development house Digital Anvil, the latest on Ion Storm's troubles, and the sale of Sierra are our lead stories this month.

247 Extended Play — T. Liam McDonald
Sick of downloading enormous patches from the Internet? The ever-upbeat Tom has a solution — buy the "re-issued" version all over again, for full retail price! Er, hold on a minute....

251 Multi-Play — Jason Bates
Coconut Monkey's Gravy Trader is one of the most highly anticipated games of 1999 (er, or maybe 2000, or 2001), and Jason has the inside dope, straight from a secret source.

252 The Point After — Rob Smolka
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257 The Killing Box — Michael Luton
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258 Alternate Lives — Michael Wolf
Wolf's whining again, but this time it may actually be justified. His stocking was stuffed with RPGs and he's just too busy to play them all.

261 The Desktop General — William R. Trotter
Thanks to a missive from a helpful reader, The Colonel has found a source to satiate his desire for more and better information about historical warfare and simulations.

262 Sim Column — Dan Bennett
We still think Dan's a sim-crazed lunatic, but at least he can take comfort in the fact that he's not alone as his readers respond to an earlier column about his passionate love of simulations.

266 Letters
Got something to say? Don't just sit there! Get it off your chest and into our magazine. We'll make you famous.

272 Next Issue
It's awards time as *PC Gamer* hands out its seal of quality to 1998's best. We'll also have *the* definitive 3D card roundup and much, much more.

We'll Miss You, Squawboy!

Don't worry, Whitta will be back next month. But Todd Vaughn — our beloved Deputy Editor and one of the first members of the *PC Gamer* team — won't be back. Todd got himself a real job, actually working for a game publisher. He's moving on up.

Todd came to work for us in our first year, when we'd just launched *PC Gamer*. We were still in North Carolina, in offices that looked like a beat-up old fabric store in a strip mall. And one day, we learned that one of our team was defecting to launch *Next Generation* — a move that would take him out to California, where we all are today. But back then, we didn't know that. All we knew was that we had to replace the guy, that it would be a pain in the ass to do so, and that we would all have to work extra hard until we could get someone to take his place.

We were steaming mad for about ten minutes, until I noticed a manila envelope on my desk. Inside was a fake newsletter some fan had done at home, with the usual "*PC Gamer* is Great" headline — an obvious attempt to get a free game out of us. But then I noticed the "Amish Boy" comics inside the newsletter, the little box-out on page two called "Did You Know?" dripping with factoids like "Monkeys will eat babies if they get the chance!" The whole thing was pretty damn funny. So I called the guy who'd sent it, and asked if he'd like to apply for a job.

When I called, Todd thought it was a prank. Still, he decided to risk it, and drove his beat-up Ford Tempo all the way from West Virginia the very next day. No, he'd never done any writing professionally, had never worked on a magazine. But he seemed to really get it, he loved games, and he interviewed well. So we gave him a shot.

He was back about three days later with a tiny U-Haul only half filled with all his possessions. He learned to smoke cigarettes, started working incredibly hard, and helped us to shape the magazine you hold right now.

And of course, we nick-named him Squawboy.

Is there a moral here? A point? No, except that we're going to miss a good friend. And that sometimes, it pays to take chances.

Matt Firme, Publisher

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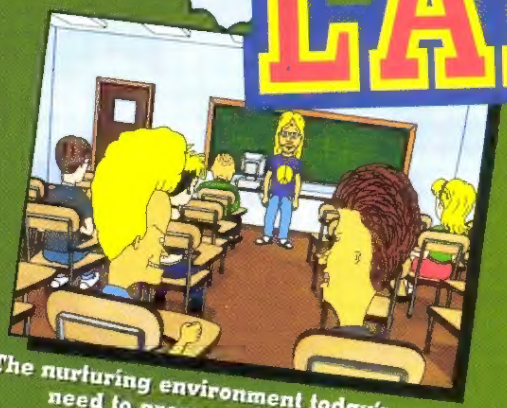

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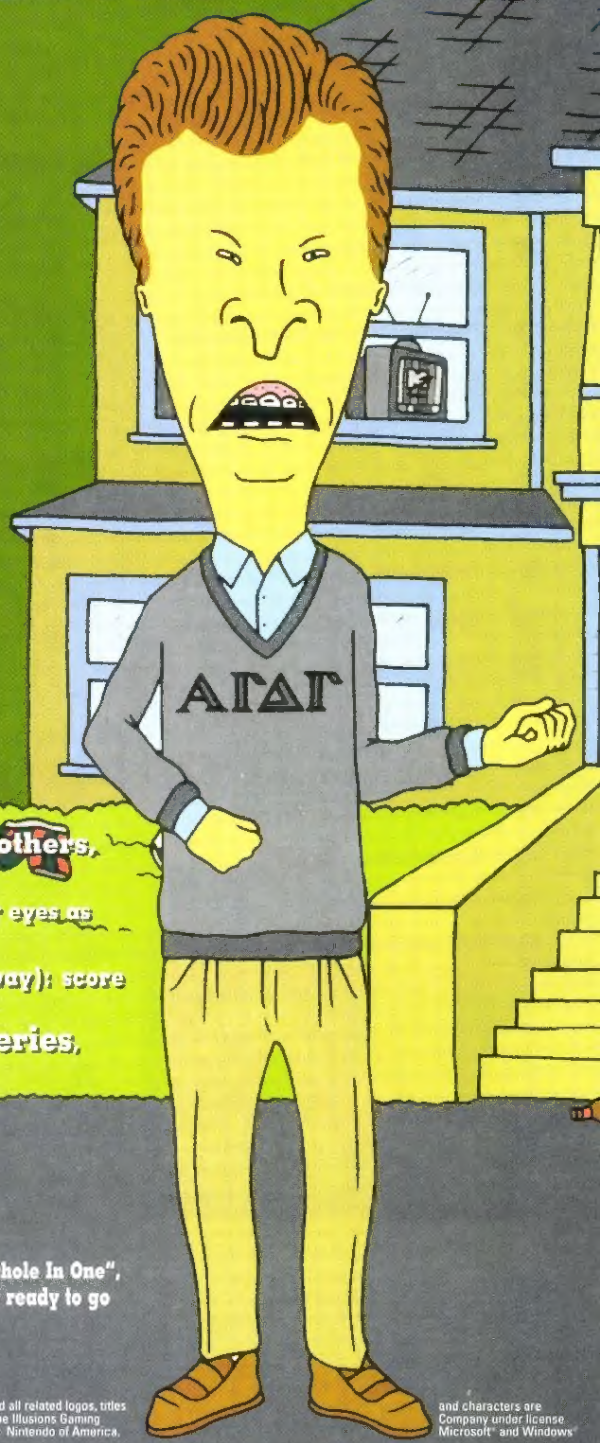

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"Half-Life restored my faith in gaming."

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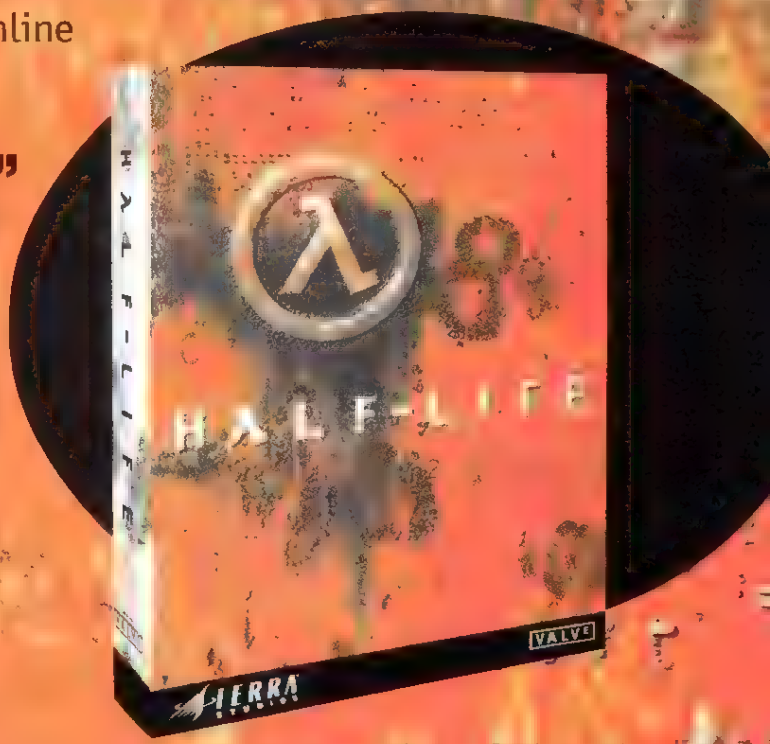

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Did Someone Say Half-Life?

Those of you who shell out your hard-earned clams each and every month for our little tome know that we scour the world for the best game demos. In the past couple of months, we've brought you exclusive demos for *Descent 3*, *Rainbow Six*, *Tres passer*, and many other coo. games. Well, this month we've got two treats for you.

The first treat is that we've scored the exclusive demo for *Redguard*, the new adventure game by Bethesda Softworks. You'll need a 3Dfx video card to play the demo.

The second treat involves a little game called *Half-Life*. No, we don't have a demo — yet — but we do have a couple of really cool things for gamers who already have the full version. The first is a multi player model featuring everyone's favorite caffeine addict, Too Much Coffee Man. The other treat is an exclu sive multi player map, designed by the *Half-Life* creators at Valve just for the readers of *PC Gamer*. We're the only source for this new level, and to say it kicks butt is an understatement. So what are you waiting for? Get gaming!

Quick Start for The CD

1. Insert the CD.
2. If Autorun does not start the CD, click the Start button and choose Run. Type *X:\PCGAMER.EXE* where *X* is the letter of your CD-ROM drive.
3. This will run *The CD*.

System Requirements

Windows 95; 486/33; 4MB RAM; Mouse

These requirements are for loading our front-end program only. Each game demo will have its own additional requirements, so be sure to read them carefully.

Attention Win3.1 Users

The *PC Gamer* front end was created for Windows 95. If you run Windows 3.1, you will have to install Win 3.1 demos separately.

Get Demos for Free!

Newsstand buyers have the choice of purchasing either the CD ROM Edition of *PC Gamer* or *PC Gamer* without a CD ROM. If you purchase the edition without a disc, you can still get free game demos in a couple of different ways:

1. Download demos and check out the GN PC web site at *http://pc.ign.com* on the internet. The site contains daily gaming news. Our own *PC Gamer* Online is now back at *http://www.pcgamer.com*
2. If you are currently subscribed to the non-disc version of *PC Gamer* and wish to receive the CD or would like information about purchasing a CD, please call (800) 898-7159. Operators are standing by Monday through Friday: 6am to 9pm MT, and Saturday/Sunday: 9am to 4pm MT

Disc Editors' Note

For the latest information on the *PC Gamer* CD, be sure to check our web site at *http://www.pcgamer.com/cdrom.html*. You'll find our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and CD updates at this location.

CONTENTS / MANUAL INSTALLATION COMMANDS

Installation Shortcuts

In the event our interface doesn't load or run properly on your machine, you can still install each demo, bypassing our front end altogether.

To manually install a demo, take a look at the Command Box located to the right. This box contains a list of demos along with their directories and installation commands.

To get up and running using the Command Box, simply use the Start-Run command for Windows 95, or the File-Run command from the Program Manager for Windows 3.1. When the dialog box appears, type in the letter of your CD-ROM drive, followed by the directory and install command listed at the right.

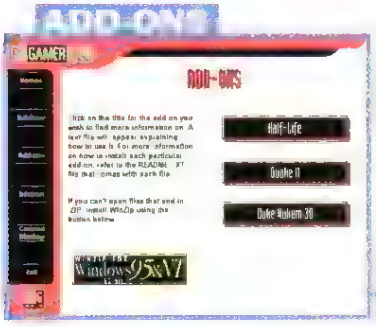
For example, to install the *Pro Pinball* demo type *X:\BRDEMO\BRDENOUS.EXE* where *X* is the letter of your CD-ROM drive, and press Enter. The setup program for *Pro Pinball* will then run. You can also use the File Manager or Explorer to find the appropriate directory on *The CD*, and then double-click on the installation command.

Please remember that if you're using Windows 3.1, you cannot run most Windows 95 demos or our front end.

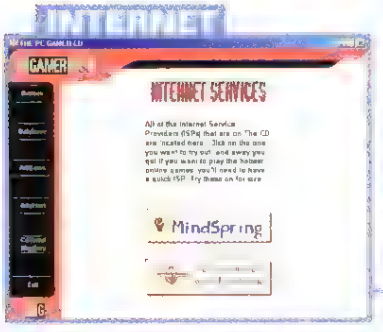
A lovely * symbol means that that demo requires DirectX in order to run. You can install DirectX by running the DXSETUP.EXE file in the \DIRECTX directory on *The CD*.

Demo	Directory	Install Command	Page	OS
Redguard*	\REDGUARD	SETUP.EXE	10	WIN95
Resident Evil 2*	\RE2DEMO	RESIDENT.EXE	10	WIN95
Wargasm*	\WARGASM	SETUP.EXE	15	WIN95
Heavy Gear 2*	\HG2DEMO	HG2DEMO.EXE	15	WIN95
Settlers III	\SETTLER3	S3DEMO E.EXE	16	WIN95
Tomb Raider III*	\TOMB3	TR3DEMONM.EXE	16	WIN95
Pro Pinball Big Race USA*	\BRDEMO	BRDENOUS.EXE	19	WIN95
Future Cop: L.A.P.D.*	\FCDEMO	PCFUTURECOPDEMO.EXE	19	WIN95
Test Drive Off-Road 2*	\TDOR2DEM	SOFTDEMO.EXE	20	WIN95
Klingon Honor Guard*	\KHGDEMO	KHGDEMO.EXE	20	WIN95
Chron X	\CHRONX	CXINSTALL.EXE	22	WIN95
Pretzel Pete*	\PPDEMO	PPDEMOUS.EXE	22	WIN95
MindSpring	\MSPRING	SETUP.EXE	25	WIN95
EarthLink	\EARTHL	SETUP.EXE	25	WIN95
Patches	\PATCHES		352	
DirectX 6.0				WIN95

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

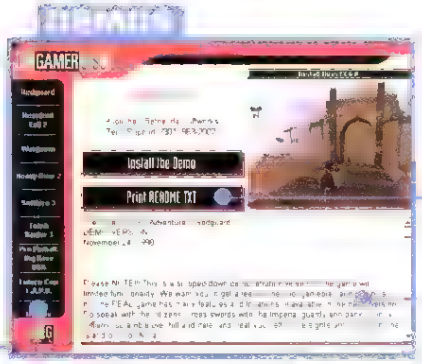


All the add-ons on *The CD* are located here, with instructions for use



If you want to get online fast, this is the place to go. Get your Internet fix here!

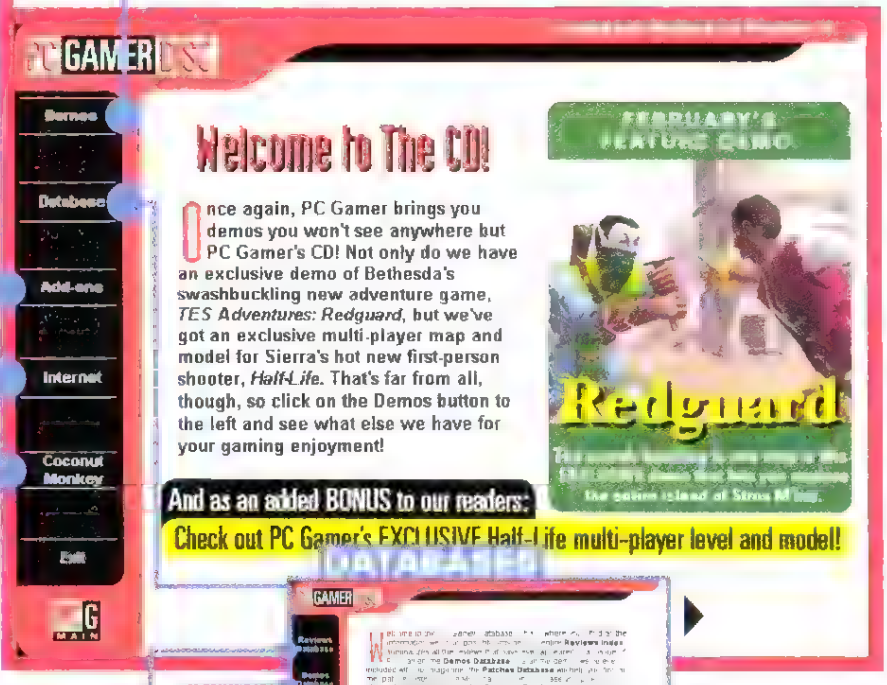
What's our lovable companion up to now? Click this button to find out!



The menu screen lets you go to any demo at any time. To access demos not available on the opening screen, just click "More Demos."

The "Install the Demo" does just what you'd expect. Most demos come with README files that further explain gameplay. If you want a hard-copy of the game's README TXT file, click "Print README TXT."

If you don't want to print the README.TXT file, you can scroll through this window and get detailed information on your selected demo.


PC GAMER
Demos
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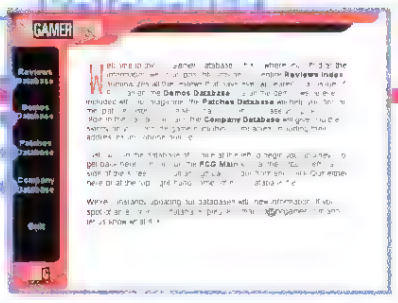
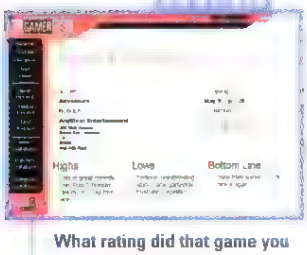
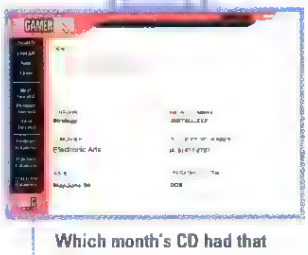
Add-ons
Internet
Coconut Monkey
Exit
Welcome to The CD!
Once again, PC Gamer brings you demos you won't see anywhere but PC Gamer's CD! Not only do we have an exclusive demo of Bethesda's swashbuckling new adventure game, *TES Adventures: Redguard*, but we've got an exclusive multi-player map and model for Sierra's hot new first-person shooter, *Half-Life*. That's far from all, though, so click on the Demos button to the left and see what else we have for your gaming enjoyment!
FEBRUARY'S FEATURE DEMO
Redguard
And as an added BONUS to our readers:
Check out PC Gamer's EXCLUSIVE Half-Life multi-player level and model!

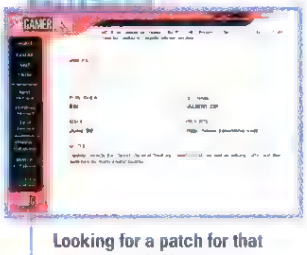




What rating did that game you found in the bargain bin get when it was new? The Reviews Database contains handy summaries of all the reviews we've ever published.



Which month's CD had that demo you've been meaning to try? The Demos Database tells you everything you need to know about demos that have appeared on *The CD*.



Looking for a patch for that ailing game? Check out our Patches Database, listing every fix and update we've covered in the Extended Play column and included on *The CD*.

Wondering how to reach a game's publisher? Here's the place to go. Whether you want their street address, tech support number, or web site address, we've got it all here.

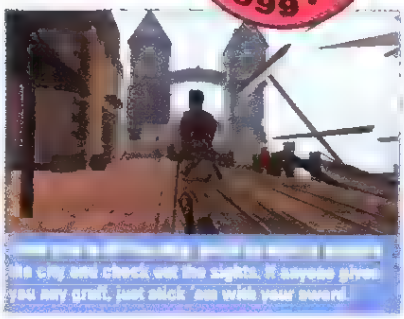
Redguard

INSTALL \REDGUARD\SETUP.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (301) 963-2002
CATEGORY Adventure
COMPANY Bethesda Softworks
Required: Win 95; P166; 32MB RAM; 150MB hard-drive space; 3Dfx video card; DirectX

Okay, here's the skinny: You're Cyrus, a mercenary and adventurer, and you've just returned to the isle of Stros M'kai to locate your sister, Iszara. There's been a bloody civil war, and the entire island is under a state of Imperial occupation, headed up by the fiendish governor, Lord Richton, and his jack-booted cronies. As you search for your sister, you find common cause with the Redguard rebels and join in their fight to rid Stros M'kai of Richton.

The demo for *The Elder Scrolls Adventures: Redguard* is a stripped down version of the game, but it lets you explore the entire main island of Stros M'kai. You won't be able to enter any of the buildings, but you can walk around and talk to folks and get an overall feeling for the full game.

When the demo starts, you can


...ke your sound and video properties. Once you're done with that, select Play Redguard, and you'll be taken to the action. You start off on a ship; wa k around the deck a bit and see if your sh.pmate will talk with you. Head off the boat using the gangplank and go on into town. There are a good number of peo ple milling about the streets, so see if you can strike up a conversation with them. Talking to everyone you meet — and knowing what questions to ask — is a big part of the full game, so you'd best sharpen your conversational skills.

select Game Options to change things

SPECIAL NOTE: The demo for *Redguard* requ res that you have a 3Dfx-based 3D accelerator installed in your PC

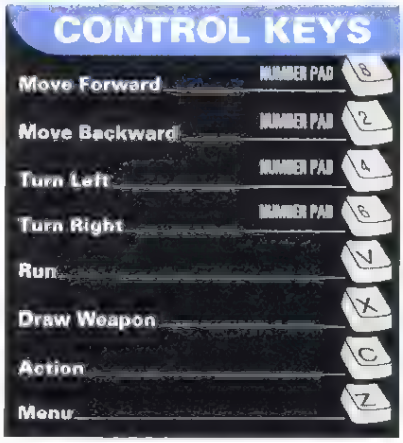
Resident Evil 2

INSTALL \RE2DEMO\RESIDENT.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (408) 774-0400
CATEGORY Action
COMPANY Capcom
REQUIRED Windows 95; Pentium 166, 16MB RAM; DirectX

WARNING!: *Resident Evil 2* is packed to the brim with zombie-munching gore. If you're a youngster — or if you're offended by the dietary habits of zombies — you may want to skip this demo.

After the mishap with the T-virus in the original *Resident Evil*, everyone thought the Umbrella Corporation would've learned its lesson and stopped fooling with zombie-making concoctions. No such luck, though. There's a new virus on the loose, and this time it's managed to find its way into Raccoon City — and, wouldn't you know it, bloodthirsty zombies and all manner of horrible creatures are running loose across the city. It's up to you to put a stop to the madness in the demo of *Resident Evil 2*.

The *Resident Evil 2* demo lets you play for 10 gory minutes as Leon (in the full version, you can play as either Leon or Claire). Once you start the demo, you can enter Options to select your video



card from the list at the top — simply scroll down, select your card, then set your resolution and other options. Click Okay, and then click on the Play *Resident Evil 2* button.

You start on the street, surrounded on all sides by slavering zombies (Take note of the flaming ones — pretty neat, huh?) If you want to try fighting the initial onslaught of undead flesh-eaters, you can try — but it's best to just run past them. At the end of the first street, turn left, then enter the gun shop

You'll want to run away from the first wave of zombies you encounter, especially the dreaded ... (so...horrible...)

on the right-hand side

That's all the help we're going to give you, but you'll want to stick around and watch the owner of that gun shop. Things get interesting, to say the least. One more tip. To fight — and you *will* need to fight — you have to enter combat mode. And if you run low on ammo, you can always switch to your knife Now, go out there and have some good, clean, zombie killing fun!

SPECIAL NOTE: The demo for *Resident Evil 2* runs directly from *The CD*. That means you've got to have the disc in your CD ROM before you can play the demo

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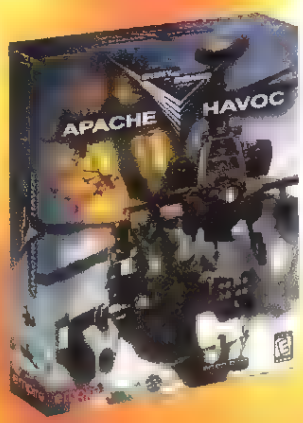

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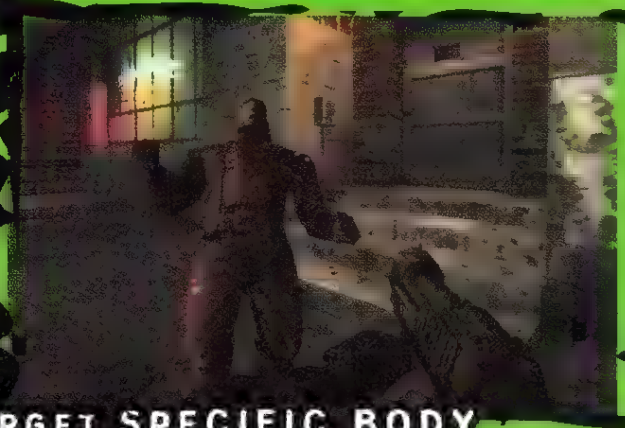
WHEN YOU ENLARGE YOUR TERRITORY, YOU INCREASE YOUR DANGER.
ARE YOU UP FOR THIS GAME?



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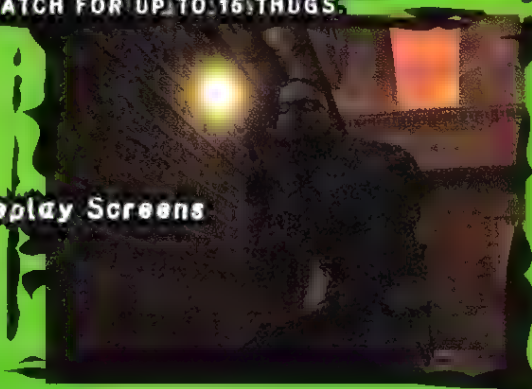

Actual Gameplay Screens

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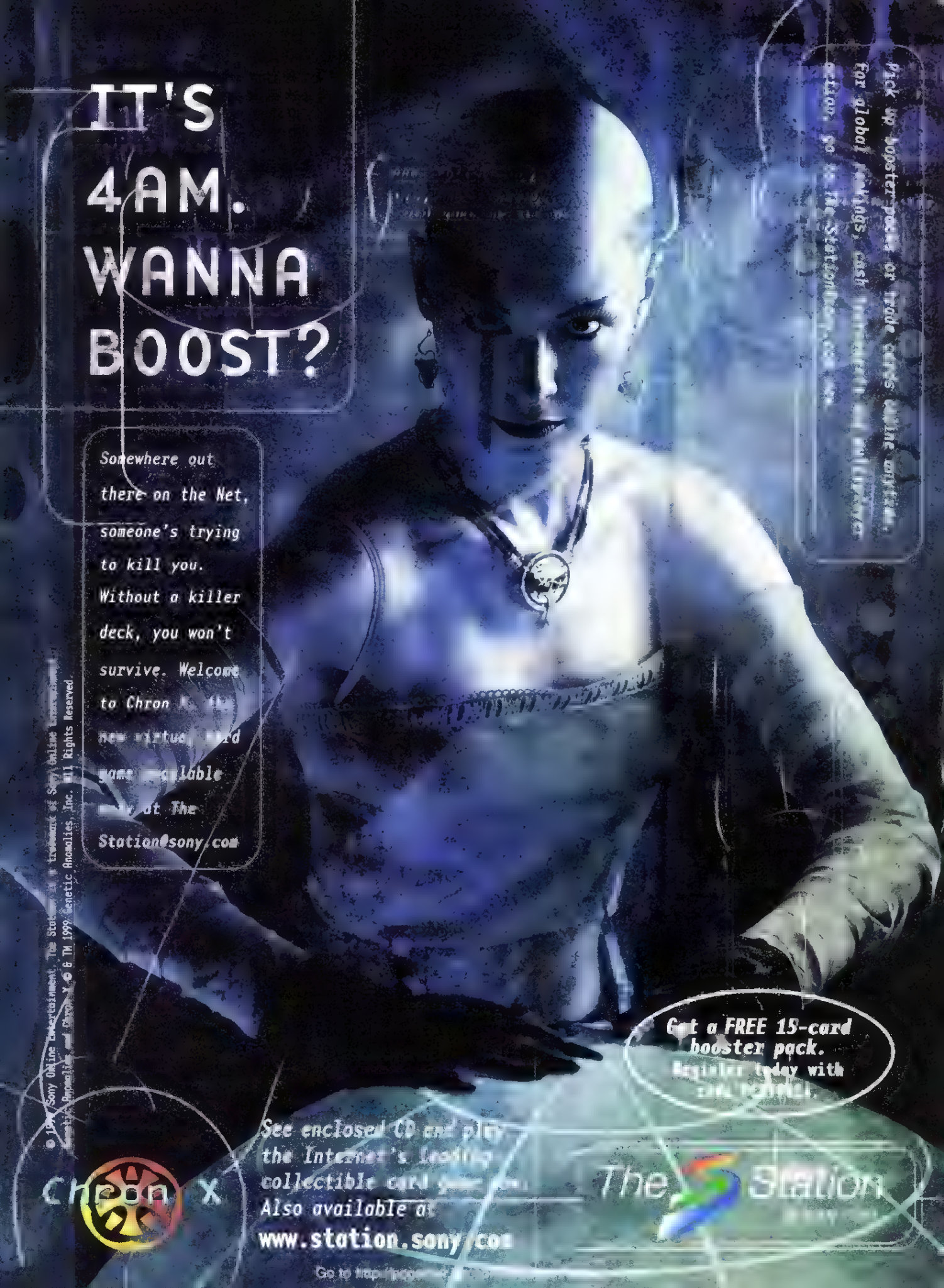
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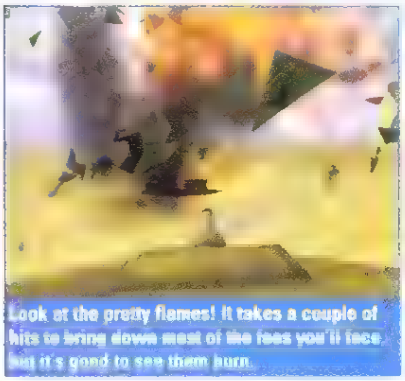
Wargasm

INSTALL \WARGASM\SETUP.EXE
TECH SUPPORT techsupport@did.com
CATEGORY Strategy
COMPANY DID
REQUIRED Windows 95, Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, 60MB hard drive space, DirectX

The world of *Wargasm* exists 30 years into a strange future where the WWWW (World Wide War Web) has seized control of the planet. As if the Internet wasn't already insane enough, the WWWW makes and controls all wars. You take on the role of a hacker who must penetrate the Web, create a virtual army, and conquer an enemy who cannot die and will not surrender. (Sort of like taking on your drunk Uncle Louie at Thanksgiving dinner. Sure, you can knock him down, but he always gets right back up)



Look at the pretty flames! It takes a couple of hits to bring down most of the foes you'll face, but it's good to see them burn.

If you get this close to the enemy, it could be all over but the crying. Try to stay back and pick off your enemy at a distance.

After installing the demo, you'll be prompted to set up your video and audio options. Tell *Wargasm* what video and sound cards you have installed, then exit to the fun. The demo lets you try two modes of play: You can enter the training area by selecting Training, or you can try some Instant action.

If you choose Training, you'll have a choice of training on foot or in a tank or a chopper. Each training mission has specific instructions, so be sure to pay attention.

When you think you've got the basics down, you'll want to try some real combat. Click on Instant, then on Level 1. You'll find yourself inside a tank, ready to kick some butt. To complete the first mission, you've got to destroy 10 enemy tanks within a fixed time limit. The three weapons available to you are the tank's main cannon, the machine gun, and grenades. Be sure to select the weapon that matches the situation. You'll find grunts scattered about the battlefield; use your machine gun on them, or just run them over. Either way, what bliss!

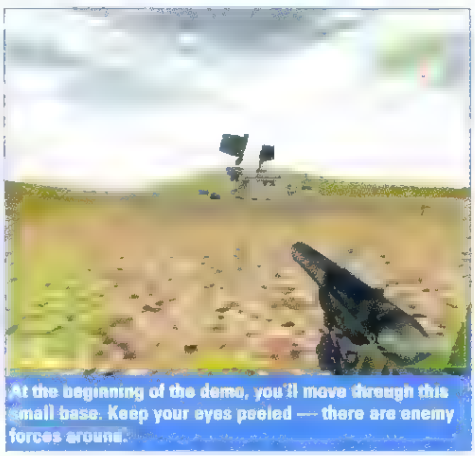
Heavy Gear II

INSTALL \HG2DEMO\HG2DEMO.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (310) 255-2050
CATEGORY Action
COMPANY Activision
REQUIRED Windows 95, Pentium 166; 32MB RAM, 62MB hard-drive space; Video accelerator card, DirectX

The forces of Earth are returning to your planet, Terra Nova, and committing horrible atrocities — prompting you to join Black Talons squad in hopes of ending these interplanetary shenanigans. Comprised of the best Gear pilots around, the Black Talons conduct covert operations and insurrectionist missions deep behind enemy lines. It's up to you and your boys to slow down those drafted Earthlings and disrupt their supply lines before it's too late.

To get to the action, start the demo and select Single Player. You'll be prompted to enter your name (try to come up with something tough-sounding — it's hard to inspire fear in the Earthlings if you're named Bunny). The next thing you'll see is the briefing screen, where you can select the type of Gear you want to drive. After making your selection, click on Launch, and you'll enter the demo.

As the action begins, you'll be briefed with your mission objectives, then you'll be tossed into the fray. If you didn't play *Heavy Gear*, you'll need to get used to the idea of swiveling your big robot's torso — shooting in one direction while moving in another is an essential tactic. Another tip: Watch out for the boys on foot — they pack a surprising punch. And don't lose sight of the mission objectives!



At the beginning of the demo, you'll move through this small base. Keep your eyes peeled — there are enemy forces around.

If you have some friends who want to duke it out in multi player, you can give it a try in this demo. Simple click Multi Player at the beginning of the demo, launch the game, and blast your friends to bits. Hey — how else can you show 'em how much you care?

SPECIAL NOTE: The demo for *Heavy Gear II* requires a 3D accelerator card that supports Z-buffering. A list of video cards that have been tested with the game is included in the demo's readme file. Check it out if you're not sure your card is supported.

CONTROL KEYS

Move Forward	8
Move Backward	2
Turn Left	4
Turn Right	6
Side Step Left	7
Side Step Right	9
Increase Throttle	+
Decrease Throttle	-
Target Enemy	T
Fire Weapon	LEFT MOUSE
Crouch	[illegible]

Settlers III

INSTALL \SETTLER3\S3DEMO_E.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (847) 995-9981
CATEGORY Strategy
COMPANY Blue Byte
REQUIRED Win95; P166; 32MB RAM; 80MB hard-drive space, 2MB video card, DirectX

Who doesn't love a strategy game? Huh? What could be more fun than playing god to a bunch of helpless folks and guiding them to legendary success — or dismal failure? (It's no skin off your nose, but the little people are probably rooting for the positive outcome.) One of the best-known series in this so-called god-game genre is the Settlers series. And — as you've probably guessed — *Settlers III* is the latest installment in that series.

This demo lets you jump straight into the action or take your time and learn how to play the game properly with the tutorial. We recommend taking a trip through the tutorial before you go nuts with the whole god thing; on opening screen, just click on Tutorial

You'll soon find yourself gazing at the main game screen. Along the bottom of the screen, you'll see a series of instructions. As you complete each task, click the little arrow to progress to the next lesson. The first thing you'll be expected to do is create a lumber mill. On the left side of the screen, toward the top, is a menu with icons. Click the build icon, and you'll get a listing of structures available to you. The lumber mill is the building in the upper left-hand corner. Select it, then simply click where you want the building to be constructed, and your boys will go to work.

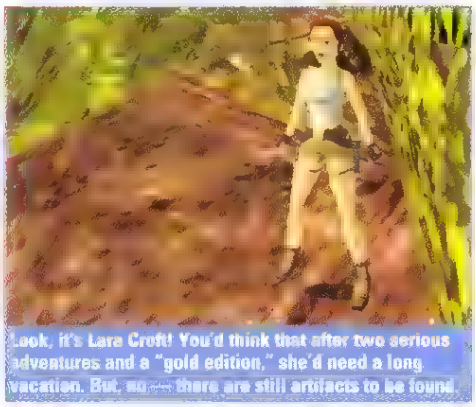
There's also a combat element to *Settlers III*. If you find yourself in a situation where it's necessary to crack some heads, left-click with the mouse to select your military units. A sword will appear, and you'll be able to send them off to die by clicking again. To scroll around the map, hold down the right mouse button and move the mouse.

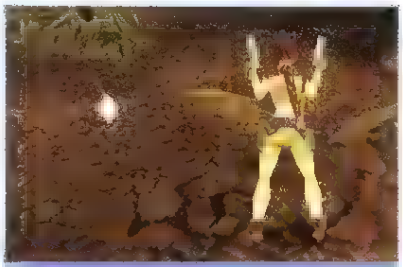
g resources, and conquer that island!

Tomb Raider III

INSTALL \TOMB3\TR3DEMONM.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (415) 547-1244
CATEGORY Arcade
COMPANY Eidos Interactive
REQUIRED Windows 95; Pentium 133; 16MB RAM; 12MB hard-drive space; 4MB SVGA card; DirectX; Mouse

Everyone's favorite adventurer is back on *The CD*! That's right, Lara Croft makes a return visit with the exciting demo for *Tomb Raider III: Adventures of Lara Croft* This time around, Lara's in search of four artifacts that came to earth inside a meteorite. It's your job to direct her through her jumping, swimming, lead-slinging quest.


Look, it's Lara Croft! You'd think that after two serious adventures and a "gold edition," she'd need a long vacation. But, no — there are still artifacts to be found.


That blue thingy is a "save crystal." You'll need it if you want to save your game. Use it wisely — and watch out for the monkeys!

The demo lets you get Lara's dainty feet wet and catch a glimpse of the gameplay contained in the full version. Start the demo and hit Enter twice to get straight to the fun. You'll start off in a situation you'll find very familiar if you played either of the first two Tomb Raider games: You're standing at the edge of a cliff — and you need to get to the bottom.

If you're new to Lara's world, take a gander at the Control Keys above. If you and Lara are already acquainted, you'll be right at home; the only difference between this game and the others is the addition of "save crystals," which you must have in your inventory before you can save your game.

Slide down the cliff, taking care to avoid the spikes. Once you're at the bottom, you'll find yourself in the ruins of an ancient city. Explore the city, wade through some quicksand, and fight any animals that may cross your path.

Be sure to draw your weapons before entering any dark passages; you never know what baddies may be lurking inside, and you can't take any chances. The full version of *Tomb Raider III* game boasts many more levels and several new locations.

CONTROL KEYS

Move Forward	↑
Move Backward	↓
Turn Left	←
Turn Right	→
Walk	Shift
Action	Ctrl
Jump/Swim	Alt
Draw/Holster Weapons	Spacebar
Display Menu	Esc
Quit Demo	Alt + F4

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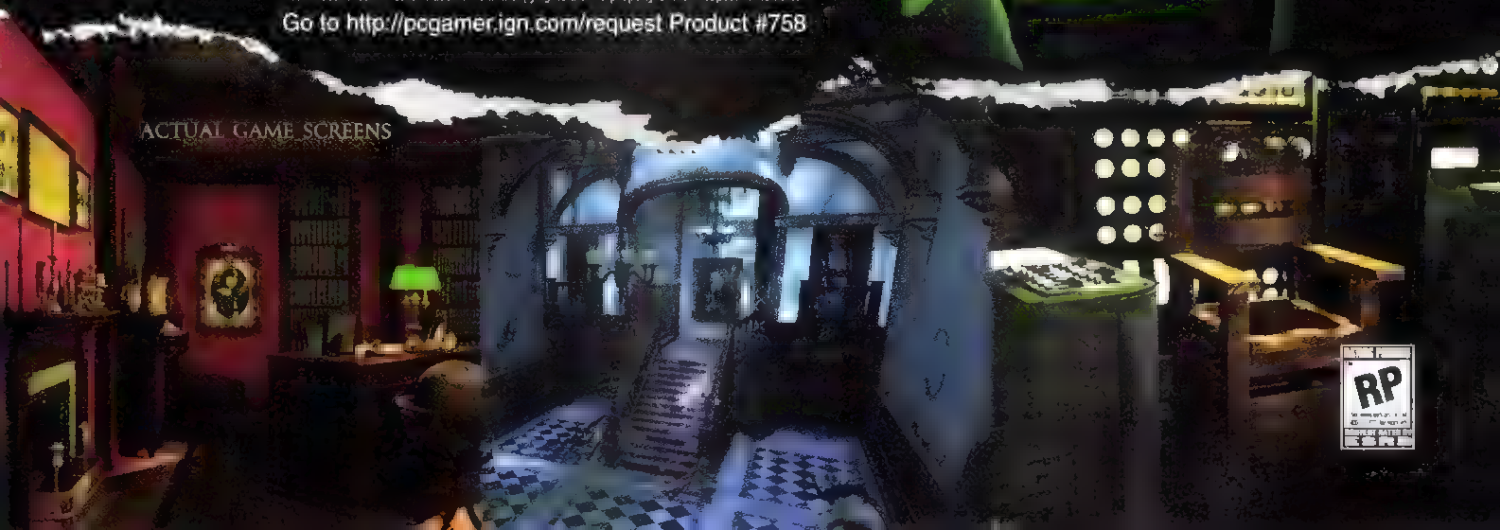
Actual game screens



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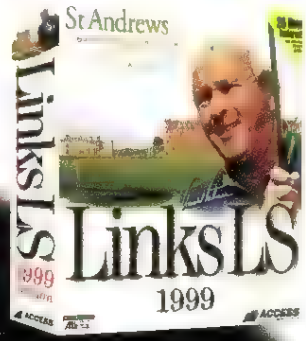

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Compare the difference between the screen capture and the actual photo of Bay Hill Club and Lodge

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Pro Pinball: Big Race USA

INSTALL \BRDEMO\BRDEMOUS.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (415) 439-4858
CATEGORY Arcade
COMPANY Empire Interactive
REQUIRED Windows 95, Pentium 166, 16MB RAM; 40MB hard drive space; DirectX

When video games started popping up in the arcades, people everywhere were sure pinball was going to die a slow death at the hands of computer technology. Pinball would just fade away quietly, until at some point in the future it would only be mentioned to frighten small children when they misbehaved — "If you don't take out the trash, the giant silver ball will come for you!" But that never happened; pinball retained its charm. It survives to this day, even making a strong showing on the old PC.

One reason pinball is still around in the age of computers is the quality of games like *Pro Pinball: Big Race USA*. This spiffy little game has cast various cities as tables, and we've got the killer demo. The kids still love to slap around the little silver ball, and who are we to try and deny them that joy?

The demo lets you try one table from the full game; it has a time limit,

Ride the rails on either side of the table to get the big points.

and it'll also stop if your score gets high enough, but you'll get a good idea of how *Big Race USA* works. After starting the demo, you'll have two options — select the icon on the right to configure the game options to your liking, or use the one on the left to jump directly to the flying-flipper action. The controls are pretty simple — the left and right shift keys control the left and right flippers, and the Enter key launches the ball. Since everyone knows the basics of pinball, you should be able to take it from there. And, if you're not familiar with the basics — if, for instance, you've been living under a damp sponge in a tavern in Estonia for the past 100 years — well, you're in for a treat, 'cause pinball is fun.

Future Cop: L.A.P.D.

INSTALL \FCDEMO\PCFUTURECOPDEMO.EXE
TECH SUPPORT (650) 571-7171
CATEGORY Arcade
COMPANY Electronic Arts
REQUIRED Windows 95, Pentium 166, 32MB RAM; 100MB hard-drive space; DirectX

In the future, criminals are no longer content to use pistols and automatic weapons — not when they've got their own anti-tank weapons, flying gunships, and all sorts of other goodies. Not

A green bracket appears around the enemy your weapons are locked on, and a thin line shows the path of your fire. Be sure to watch the radar at the top — those red dots tell you where the bad guys are.

to be outdone, the L.A.P.D. has armed itself with similar weapons, one of which is a mech, hover vehicle armed to the teeth with machineguns, rockets, and grenades. You're going to need all that firepower to get the job done, because this Los Angeles is no city of angels.

The demo for *Future Cop: L.A.P.D.* puts you behind the wheel of your own mech/hover vehicle. After starting the demo, you'll be able to set up your preferences and change both the configuration of your video card and the type of controller you'll use. We recommend a gamepad if you've got one (the gamepad setup menu lists "Sony" and "Sega" for some reason, but your average PC gamepad will work).

Once you're done fooling with the demo's configuration, jump in. The opening screen offers a lot of options, but the only one you need to concern yourself with is the Start button, placed under the map. Click it, and you'll be tossed into the action.

Your machine guns will auto target (a thin line extends from the front of your vehicle to show where you're aiming). The other weapons are a bit trickier to use; you'll need to estimate where their fire will hit and lead your targets appropriately.

The action in the demo is fast and furious, with plenty of butt-stomping to go around. Don't be ashamed if you're crushed like a grape the first time around; with a little practice, you'll be able to show those crooks who's boss.

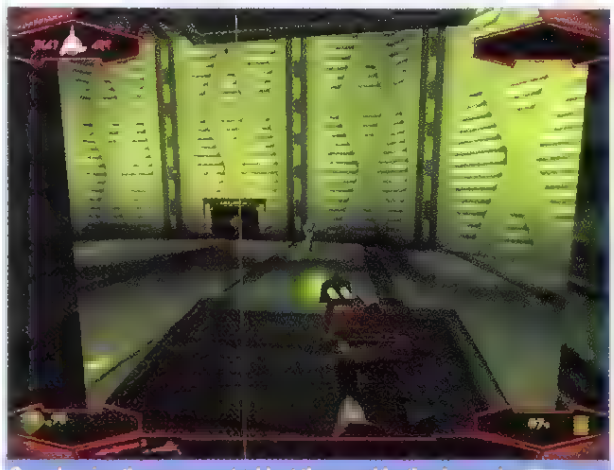
Klingon Honor Guard

\KHGDEMO\KHGDEMO.EXE
(510) 522-1164
CATEGORY Action
COMPANY MicroProse
REQUIRED Win 95, Pentium 233, 32MB; 60MB hard-drive space; 2MB PCI video card; DirectX

Last year, a little game called *Unreal* was released, and it sported some pretty spiffy graphics. You might remember hearing about it. And certainly everyone has heard of Star Trek, that venerable series of TV shows, movies, books, and lunchboxes. Now the two meet in *Klingon Honor Guard*, a first-person shooter set in the Star Trek universe and built on the *Unreal* engine. In the game, you're an elite warrior training for induction into the Klingon Honor Guard – until somebody tries to kill Gowron, the leader of the Klingon High Council. You're thrust into active duty and sent off to capture the scum-bags responsible.

The demo for *Klingon Honor Guard* lets you try out a bit of the full version. If you've played first-person shooters, you already know the drill: journey through the levels, fight off the bad guys, and uncover the truth along the way. After you start the demo, you'll come to a screen that gives you your objectives for this level. Essentially, you're smuggled aboard a space station to capture an evildoer named Thress. Press the Fire button (left mouse button) to enter the demo. If you want to access the options for the demo (control settings, audio and video modes, etc.) you'll need to hit the ESC key.

As the demo begins, you find yourself inside a cargo crate. turn around and grab the weapon behind you, then head out. You'll be confronted by a guard; take him down Klingon-style. Head up to the upper level of the shipping area — and you'll need to figure out the rest for yourself, Klingon-boy.


Once leaving the cargo crate, blast the guard by the door using high-tech Star Trek weapon. Ooh, it's powerful!

Remember, Klingons do not accept failure so if you screw up, don't even think about returning home. Just go hide out in a bar somewhere on the other side of the galaxy. Maybe you can get a job mopping the floors on some Federation cargo ship

Test Drive Off-Road 2

\TDOR2DEM\3DFXDEMO.EXE
\TDOR2DEM\SOFTDEMO.EXE
(408) 296-8400
CATEGORY Racing
COMPANY Accolade
REQUIRED Windows 95; Pentium 166; 16MB RAM; 20MB hard-drive space; DirectX

Just moments after the wheel was invented, everyone started racing. Of course, they only had the one wheel, so racing amounted to a bunch of people running in circles around it, bumping into each other, whacking their heads on the ground, and being eaten alive by saber-toothed tigers. Not a lot of fun, but our passion for racing managed to survive. Fast-forward a few thousand years, and gamers everywhere feel the same primal urge to go fast and not be eaten by tigers. There are drag racing games, street racing games, and every other kind of racing game imaginable. At the end of the day, however, nothing's more fun — or more primal — than off road racing.

CONTROL KEYS

Steer Left	←
Steer Right	→
Accelerate	↑
Backwards	L
Shift Up	A
Shift Down	Z
Rear View	X
Pause	P

That's where games like *Test Drive Off-Road 2* come in. The demo for this, the latest addition to Accolade's long-running racing franchise, lets you take to the back roads in a Hummer. To get to the action, start the demo and enter the Options area to configure the video, audio, and other goodies. Once that's done, select Single Race, and you're off!

The race begins on a paved surface, which quickly turns into a torturously unpaved surface. For the most part, you play *Off Road 2* like any other racing game, although you must keep the track conditions in mind. There are bumps all over the place — some of which you'll want to avoid — so watch the track ahead and plan accordingly.

The full version of the game includes many more tracks, plus a multi player mode. Now go have some fun tearing through the mud. The inventors of the wheel would have wanted it that way.

d be more fun than driving a Hummer? How g a Hummer off-road! Yeah!

SPECIAL NOTE: There are two versions of the demo available for you to install. One is a 3Dfx version (which requires that you have a 3Dfx card), and the other is a software version for you folks who lack a hardware accelerator.

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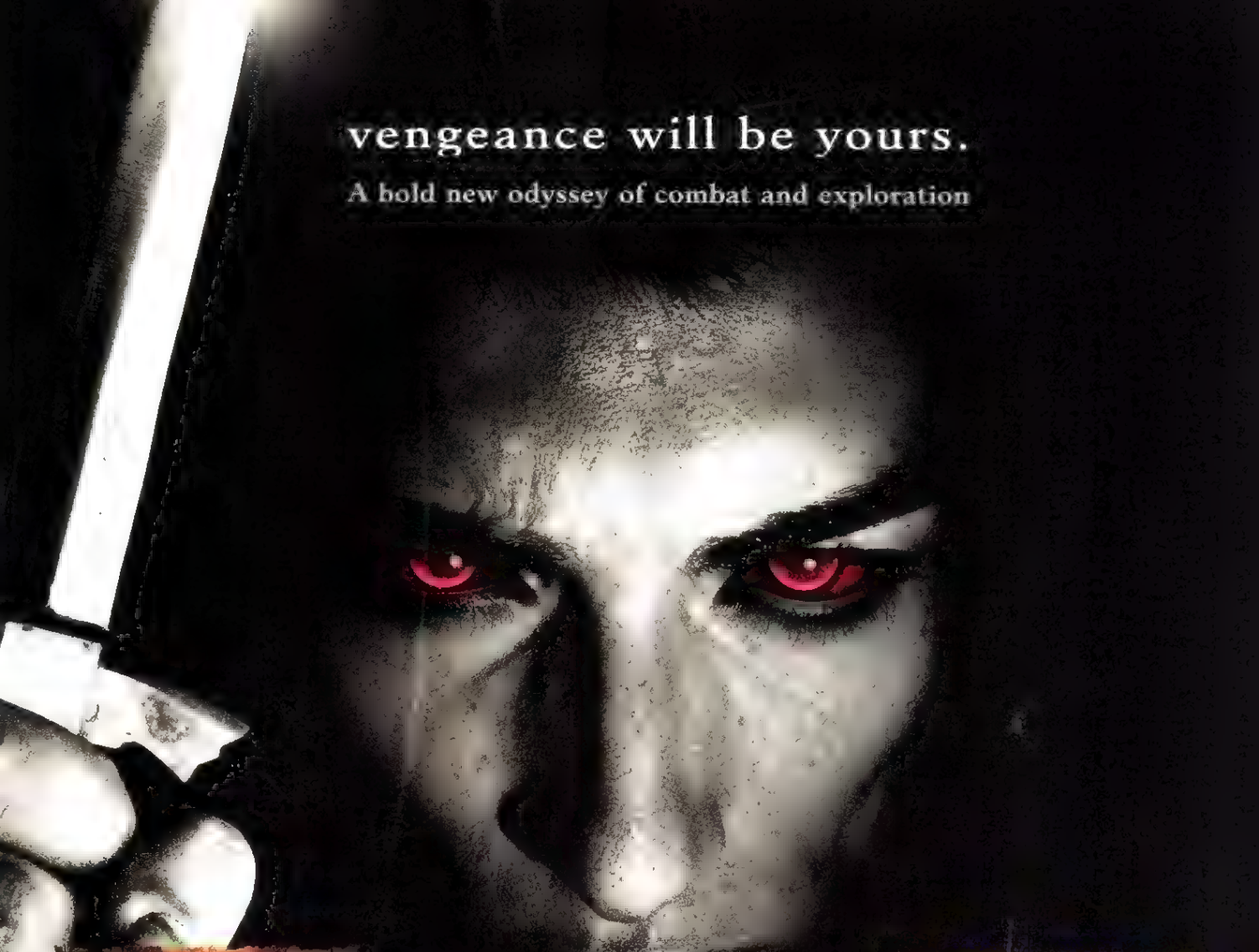

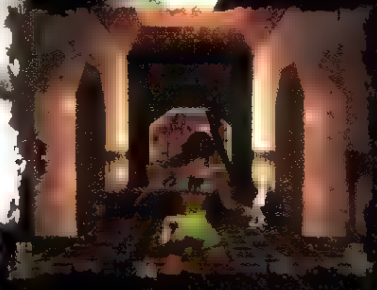

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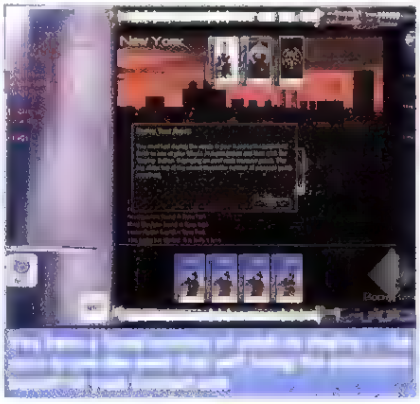
Go to http://pcgamer.ign.com/request Product #265

Chron X

INSTALL \CHRONX\CXINSTALL.EXE
TECH SUPPORT www.thestation.sony.com
CATEGORY Strategy
COMPANY The Station@sony.com
REQUIRED Win 95; Pentium 133; 16MB RAM, 28MB hard-drive space; Internet connection

The year is 2091, and the population is straining the Earth's resources — but technology hasn't reached the point where it can offer any assistance. The U.S. has collapsed into feudalism, and the United Nations is barely keeping order around the world. Things are pretty much looking grim across the board — and rumor has it we're approaching a new epoch, a time known as Chron X, when the destiny of mankind will be determined.



Chron X is an urban combat game you play over the Internet. Two gamers, each representing the leader of a combat unit, battle it out in cities around the world with the simple goal of destroying the other's headquarters. Each player commands a varied group of mercenaries, street thugs, hackers, and corporate killers in a world of endless wars and dwindling resources. If you've played collectible card games like *Magic: The Gathering*, you've already got a basic understanding of how to play the game; if not, this demo will give you a pretty good look inside the world of *Chron X*.

Like those collectible card games, *Chron X* can be rather complicated and involved; it'd take a few pages to explain how to play just the demo — but you'll find a pretty extensive online manual on *The CD*. It's in Adobe Acrobat format, but you'll find the Acrobat viewer on *The CD*, too.

SPECIAL NOTE: To play *Chron X*, you'll need an Internet connection. And while there's no charge to try out the demo from our *PC Gamer* CD, your normal Internet connection and phone fees will apply while you're playing the demo online. *Chron X* will probably need to download the latest program updates before the game begins, so keep that in mind if your Internet provider places a time limit on your online sessions.

Pretzel Pete

INSTALL \PPDEMO\PPDEMOUS.EXE
TECH SUPPORT www.xsivgames.com
CATEGORY Arcade
COMPANY XSIV Games
REQUIRED Windows 95; Pentium 133; 16MB RAM; 4MB hard-drive space; DirectX

Some plans are so hideous, so foul, so disturbing, that they could only have sprung from the most diabolical of minds. We're talking — of course — about Baker Bob, that nefarious fiend who desires nothing more than to turn all of humanity into living pretzels.

Fortunately for mankind, Pretzel Pete is armed with his mighty Pretzel Net and Mustard Cannon, and he's ready to make the world safe for common, non pretzel type folks.

We're not making this up. See for yourself.

The demo for *Pretzel Pete* lets you take on the role of Pete himself and lets you try out some pretzel-catching action. Fire the demo up and select either single- or multiplayer. (That's right, the demo allows multiplayer action, too!) Once in the game, you'll be placed inside a city that's overrun with psychotic pretzels. Help the nice folks by driving next to the pretzels and scooping them up in your net. Try not to hit any of the people running around — it doesn't hurt 'em, but it slows you down.

The full version contains lots more pretzel-netting action. Drive safe, keep your net poised, and bring down Baker Bob and his salty minions of death.

SPECIAL NOTE: The demo for *Pretzel Pete* does not install a shortcut to your desktop. To start the demo, enter the C:\pete folder and double-click on the file called demo.exe.

Best Overall. Prepare to be blown away. You won't believe the sound and fury these speakers can muster.
Christopher Breen, Equip Magazine

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-Ivan Berger, Audio Magazine

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Maximum PC Magazine

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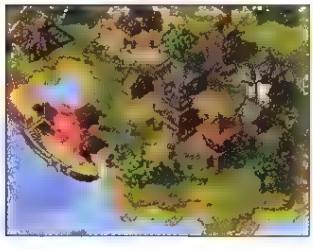

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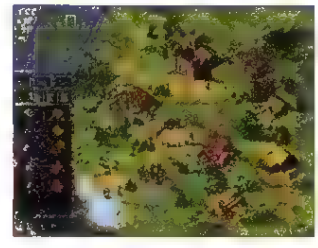

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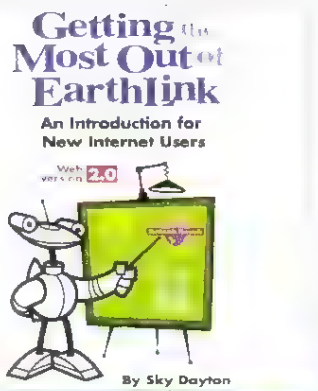

EarthLink Network, winner of the 1997 *PC Magazine* Editors' Choice Award for Best Internet Service Provider, supports all kinds of Internet games and even has its own online gaming site (*www.thearena.com*). EarthLink membership includes unlimited Internet access, unlimited E-mail, a free 6MB of space for your own web site, a free subscription to *bLink*, EarthLink's newsletter, a fully customizable Personal Start page, and your choice of browser.

EarthLink is renowned for its 24/7, around the clock superior custom service and tech support, so if you find yourself with questions, rest assured that EarthLink will have a friendly representative standing by to help you out.

To get you started, EarthLink offers *PC Gamer* readers a 15 day free trial, plus free set-up (a savings of $25!). After that, you'll be billed $19.95 a month unless you cancel.

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Online service
MindSpring
REQUIRED 486, 8MB RAM, 25MB HD space; SVGA, Windows 3.1+; 14.4Kbps or faster modem

MindSpring will launch you onto the Internet with all sorts of goodies at your disposal — you can use E-mail, the World Wide Web, read Usenet newsgroups, and even gain access to free news, stock information, and web support.

The pricing is competitive, too: the Light service gives you five hours of service a month for $6.95 and $2 per each additional hour, along with 5MB of web space for your own web page. The Standard plan is $14.95 a month for 20 hours, with each additional hour costing one dollar. You also get 5MB of web space with this one. The Unlimited service gives you unlimited hours for $19.95 a month (without web space), while The Works service gives you unlimited hours, along with two extra E-mail boxes and ten megabytes of web space for $26.95 a month!

MindSpring uses its Pipeline+ software to give Windows 95 users a direct TCP/IP connection to the Internet, using the Microsoft Dial-Up Adapter. That means any of those online games that say they require a TCP/IP connection will work beautifully with MindSpring. If you use Windows 3.1, MindSpring uses Connect rather than the Dial-Up Adapter, which gives you a 16-bit TCP/IP connection, so you can still play those online games (as long as they don't require a 32-bit connection). For the online gamer, MindSpring offers all you need to start fragging your friends!

With its realistic pricing and a whole slew of services available, MindSpring is a good starting point for getting onto the Internet. Best of all, if you install the software from *The PC Gamer CD*, the $25 launching fee will be waived. Talk about service!

HAVING PROBLEMS?

We cannot provide technical support for problems you may encounter with demos on *The CD*. Please use the tech support numbers listed with the demos. You can also go to *http://pcgamer.ign.com/static/magazine/cdrom.shtml* for a FAQ and other info.

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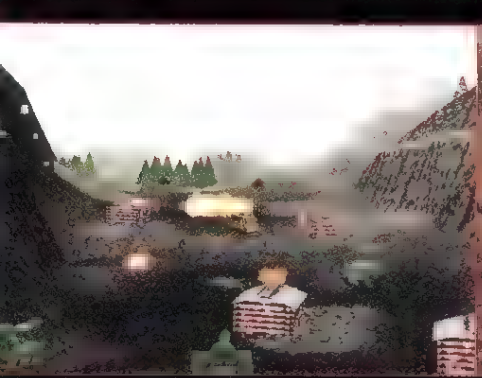

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In the year 2085 the Collapse came hard and fast. Only a select few had the strength and intelligence to rebuild the world from the embers of a nuclear holocaust. You were one of them.

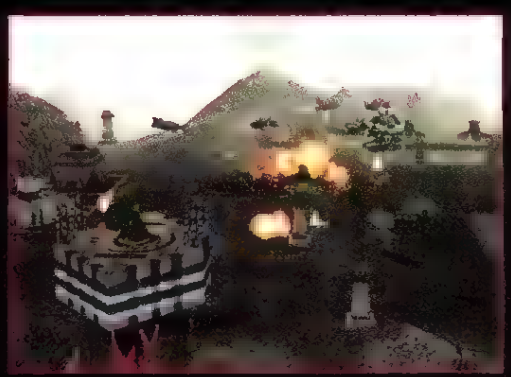
Warzone 2100 showcases a depth of play never seen before in a strategy game. 400 different types of technologies allow you to design and build more than 2000 battle units. That's right. Unit designs aren't predetermined for you. Use your own wits to create an unbeatable battle arsenal.

The AI engine is so sophisticated that it allows you to recycle the experience of your field units into bigger, better and even more fierce war machines. Over time, combat units become more accurate, command units command larger groups of troops and repair units repair faster and more efficiently.

Warzone 2100 slams the door on other top-down 2D strategy games. It showcases a lightning fast, fully functional 3D game engine with a rotatable and zoomable camera for fast and furious gaming action. Not just eye candy, you'll experience true line-of-sight and fog-of-war effects. Strategically placed radar units warn you of hidden enemy units and allow you to lob mortar shells over mountain obstructions.

WARZONE 2100

STRATEGY BY DESIGN



DOWNLOAD THE PC DEMO AT:

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Pumpkin Studios

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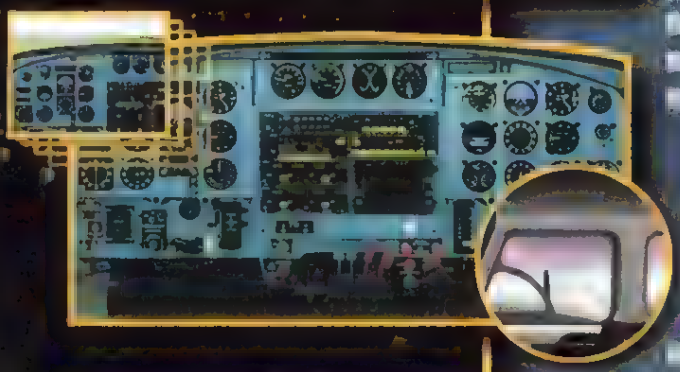
There's nowhere in this world you can't go. Real-time moveable sectional charts and interactive vector maps allow accurate navigation around 18,000 airports in 200 countries, including over 13,000 runways in 1,500 airports.

The aircraft you are about to fly is fully operational. The game features accurate cockpits and avionics, all in the correct proportions and layout of the original aircraft. Every gauge, switch, and knob in the cockpit is ready for interaction, thanks to the most meticulously detailed cockpit in this, with multiple integrative interior views.



It's the most realistic general aviation flight simulator ever created for the PC. Integrated flight planner and aircraft load out allows visual planning of cross-country flights and user-defined fuel, passenger, and cargo loads.

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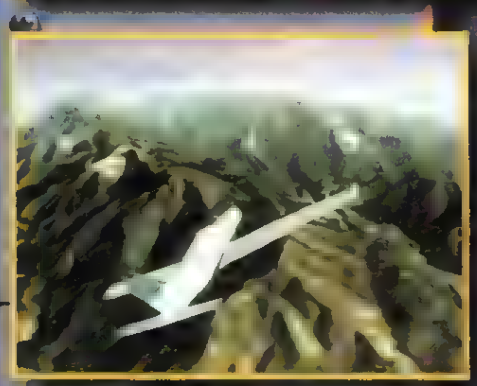
- FLY! Now allows you to pilot your aircraft in a variety of pre-configured conditions and scenarios.



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Driver

Outrun the law in this gorgeous new action game

The creators of the Destruction Derby series are gearing up to hit the streets with a hard-driving racing game that puts you behind the wheel of a getaway car.

—Todd Vaughn

With its impressive physics engine and tasty visual effects, *Driver*'s hard-driving gameplay should be one of the year's most original action games.

FYI
FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Category: Action
Developer: Reflections Studios
Publisher: TBA
Percentage Complete: 70%

In a nutshell:

This fast-paced driving game lets you assume the role of a professional getaway driver, taking the wheel to back up bank robbers, drug runners, and mob henchmen in their illicit activities. Using seductive hardware-accelerated graphics and tight control, you'll race through detailed urban environments and outrun the law in one of the most visually impressive racing games yet.

What's so special?

Though its impressive physics and eye-popping graphic effects are almost worth the price of admission alone, *Driver*'s innovative gameplay should give it a leg-up on traditional driving games.

And when's it coming out?

Spring

In the world of action-oriented driving games, innovation and creativity are all too rare commodities. While high-end simulations become more sophisticated and complex by adding more believable physics and greater control, the arcade scene has remained fairly static, offering up the same features and functions with few variations over the years. Though arcade racers have come a long way since *Pole Position*, the workmanlike concepts of time trials and checkpoints are getting very long in the tooth. But now, the action racing genre is about to get a welcome kick in the pants with *Driver*, the latest creation of Reflection Studios.

As the creator of Sony's popular Destruction Derby series, Reflections has already proven it knows how to breathe new life into the racing genre, and its latest effort looks like it should shake things up even more with its attractive game design and technical prowess.

It all starts with a criminally attractive concept. You're a new getaway driver offering your services to anyone who can afford them. You'll find work from such unsavory types as mobsters to bank robbers who need your lead-foot abilities to avoid getting caught. The only trick is that you'll have entire cities to race through, filled with pedestrians, traffic, and lots and lots of police cars hot on your trail. Brought to life with '70s-style late night movie car chases and built from the ground up on an entirely new graphics engine, *Driver* is re-inventing the racing genre to the nth degree with convincing environments, believable physics, and fast-paced gameplay that would make Starsky and Hutch proud.

Making no effort to disguise influences from dozens of car chase themed TV shows and movies, *Driver*'s mission-based gameplay has you taking on jobs left on your answering machine (a la "The Rockford Files") and selecting the

http://pc.ign.com

ones that match your skills or, at the very least, pay well. In some missions you may need to be at just the right place at the right time to collect a troupe of bank robbers as they complete their heist, while in others, you'll have to troll the streets to tail a specific car. As you gain experience or become too hot for a particular area, you'll move on to test your skills in urban locations all around the U.S., such as like San Francisco, Miami, and Los Angeles.

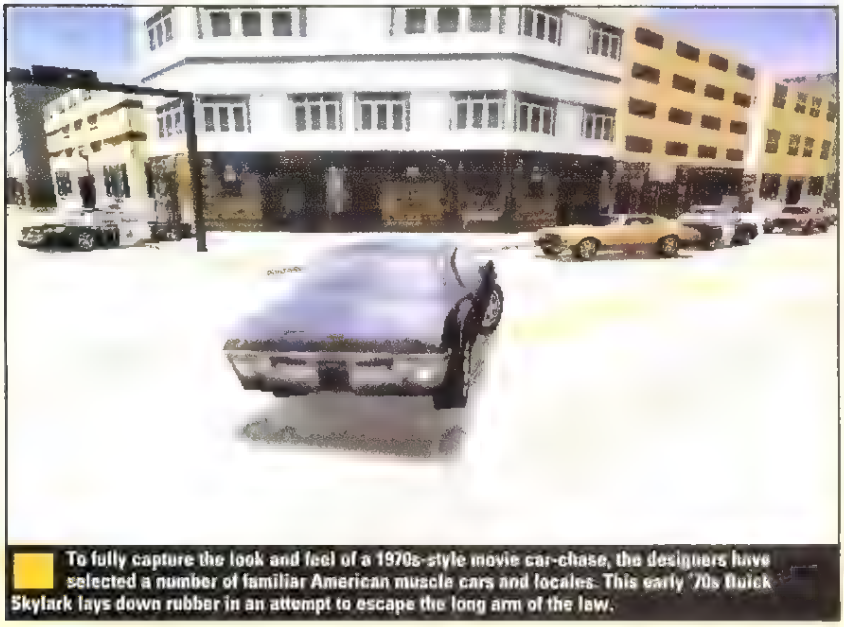
Driver will be played from a third person perspective, and the designers have gone out of their way to make sure it has the fast-paced chase scenes they're shooting for. The third person perspective has allowed them to develop an intelligent camera system that shows off the car and the environment without compromising control. Make a quick, hard turn under heavy acceleration, and the camera doesn't stay locked in a behind-the-car view — it lingers for a moment, allowing you to appreciate the hubcap-loosening forces as the car's body rolls and tilts into the turn. Once you start accelerating forward again the camera snaps back smoothly to the default view.

A replay mode will allow you to position cameras anywhere in the game world in order to view your criminal exploits over and over again.

Like any '70s cop show or late night car chase flick, *Driver*'s selection of cars are more like starring characters than vehicles and it's apparent that each one has a different personality on screen. Though the complete roster of cars hasn't been finalized, the designers assure us that some popular heavyweight American iron from the '70s has been recruited to ensure that the look and feel of these exciting chases is as true to the concept as possible. During our demonstration, the designers showed off an early '70s Buick Skylark, a blunt nosed 4,000 pound hulk prized for its massive engine and tire churning power. As our host wheeled the car around city streets, the car would respond with an amazing display of physics that accurately depicted the car's weight and power as it bounced and jostled over curbs and bumps.

As in *Destruction Derby*, collision modeling gives the player a few extra worries when being chased by the law. Not only will you have to worry about smacking into objects that will slow your progress, the damage caused by the collision affects your car in believable ways. Slap into a lamppost, and you won't just bounce back unscathed, you'll risk putting a hole in your radiator, giving you precious little time to make your escape before your engine seizes up.

In order to keep the realistic feel of life on the edge, nearly every area in the gameworld can be driven on, over, or through, and sometimes the environment can even be helpful. In some missions, you're expected to keep a low profile, and if you're unlucky enough to be spotted, you'll need to figure out ways to cover your tracks. For this, the designers have added the ability to enter buildings like parking garages and the garages of private homes. For example, if you're being chased in a night time mission and find an open garage in the suburbs, you can wheel inside, cut the lights, and wait until your pursuers pass on by, then ease away down back alleys and side streets to avoid further detection.



To fully capture the look and feel of a 1970s-style movie car-chase, the designers have selected a number of familiar American muscle cars and locales. This early '70s Buick Skylark lays down rubber in an attempt to escape the long arm of the law.

When horsepower ain't enough, crashing into cops can create enough confusion to allow for a quick getaway.

As in any real city, the vehicle traffic will respond thanks to a robust artificial intelligence that allows AI drivers to honk their horns, swerve out of the way, or pull over to the side of the road. In the San Francisco level, steep hills and dangerous cross-streets make for exciting chases as you tear down busy streets weaving in and out of traffic and catching air over rolling hills — just like Steve McQueen in *Bullitt*.

Along with the variety of vehicles and environments, pedestrians add an extra convincing touch to the urban scenery, as they make their way to crosswalks and mill about in parking lots and parks. After much deliberation, the designers decided to keep the game gore free, opting instead to let the pedestrians flee for their lives, as they jump out of the way, yell at you, and even watch the spectacle of the chase. With that in mind, simply blasting around a city with reckless abandon and creating havoc should prove fun in and of itself.

Ultimately though, the chase is the thing, and Reflections is pulling out the stops to make sure the cops react appropriately. If you keep your nose clean and avoid drawing attention to yourself, the cops may not even notice your illicit activities, but if you start ripping through the streets and disrupting traffic, cops will descend from all directions, using sophisticated AI to bring you to justice. Though you'll certainly notice the cops in hot pursuit behind you attempting to bump you off the road, unseen police cars may be racing through parallel streets in an attempt to cut you off or set up a roadblock. Through your police scanner, you'll be able to pick up the police chatter, and if you're lucky, use that information to squeak by two police cars attempting to create a roadblock only to have them crash into each other in a smoking heap.

Though *Driver* is still several months away from release, and still needs to firm up a relationship with a North American publisher, Reflections looks to have a real winner on its hands. We can't *wait* to get a finished copy of this one! PCG

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VENOMOUS CREATURE SPAWNED TO CRIPPLE ENEMIES WITH A DISCHARGE OF CORROSIVE POISON.
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Rayman 2

A side-scrolling hero makes his triumphant return

He's got no arms...and he's got no legs. But that's not gonna stop Rayman from laying the smack down in his latest 3D extravaganza, brought to you from the folks at Ubi Soft.

—Colin Williamson

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Category: Arcade
Developer: Ubi Soft
Publisher: Ubi Soft, (415) 547-4000
www.ubisoft.com
Percentage Complete: 90%

In a nutshell:

Rayman 2 **brings the traditional 2D side-scroller into the third dimension with real panache, offering lush environments and massive replay value. The gameplay promises to deliver more action and more character abilities than in the original game.**

What's so special?

Rayman 2's **fantastic vistas, Disney-esque character designs, and innovative gameplay should bring top-notch,** ***Mario 64*****-style 3D platforming action to the PC (finally!). And for those of you who found the original too hard, there are now options to play** ***Rayman 2*** **on different difficulty settings.**

And when's it coming out?

Spring

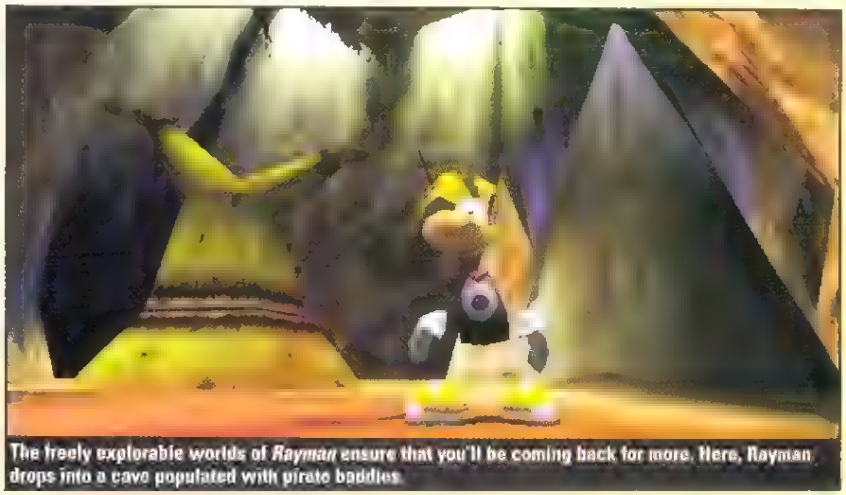
Fans of two dimensional side scrolling games smile when they reminisce about *Rayman*, one of the last great examples of the genre. Premiering on Atari's ill fated Jaguar console before making its way to the PC, *Rayman* featured memorable characters, challenging gameplay, and some of the best 2D art and animation gamers had ever seen. And nowadays, with everyone from Mario to Gex going the 3D route, it seemed only natural that the French design group at Ubi Soft would set its sights on a new *Rayman* that would add some "depth" to our hero.

As *Rayman 2* kicks off, a mysterious animal herding guild is determined to create an interplanetary zoo — with Rayman as the star attraction. He and his buddies are kidnapped by a group of space pirates, who toss them into the middle of a maniacal interplanetary menagerie. While Rayman manages to escape from his captors, his little buddies aren't as lucky; he's got to rescue them from captivity and make it out in one piece.

The lack of limbs doesn't seem to stop Rayman from getting it on with the ladies.

Project director Michel Ancel believes that the addition of a third dimension gives this version of *Rayman* infinitely more personality, while bringing an expressive cinematic element to the game. "We can introduce *Rayman 2* with many more emotions than the original," he says. "Sensations like vertigo and speed are enhanced. It's a very strong tool that allows the player to fully immerse him or herself into the game."

The "right" way to do a 3D platformer has been widely debated on the console formats — Nintendo's *Super Mario 64* featured large worlds that were quasi linear in nature, while the PlayStation's *Crash Bandicoot* stuck the player on a straight "track" with little deviation. *Rayman 2*, however, is carving its own path. "We wanted to avoid the biggest flaw of 3D games," says Ancel, "where the worlds are too open, and the players get lost. You end up with a very slow game where the player does not really know *what* to do, because the plot lines are too far away from each another. In *Rayman 2*, we hope that the player will rarely have to ask himself what he is supposed to be doing there."



The freely explorable worlds of *Rayman* ensure that you'll be coming back for more. Here, Rayman drops into a cave populated with pirate baddies.

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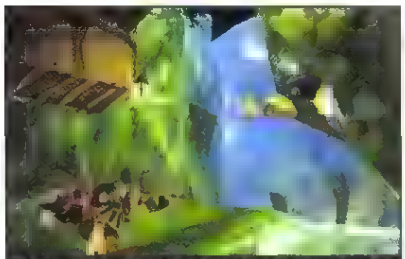
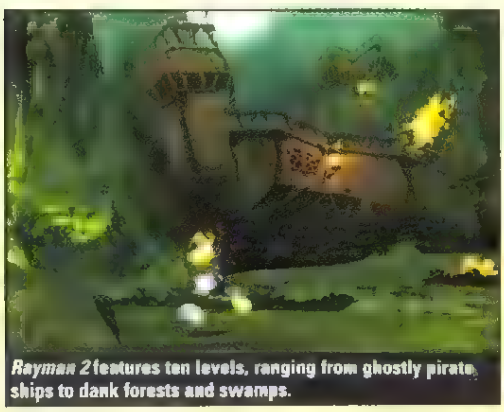


This menacing pirate makes the shocking realization that it would be quite impossible to draw and quarter Rayman, due to his lack of limbs.

In order to keep things moving, the *Rayman 2* team has settled on a mix between the two styles of 3D platformers. "The game is not 'two-and-a-half-D' like *Crash Bandicoot*," says Ancel. "Some parts start wide open with magnificent perspectives, then you get to narrow paths that are more intuitive and rhythmic, and you finally end up with an incredible panoramic view. There will be some passages with more freedom of movement, but the player will always know where to go."

One of the funkiest aspects of the original *Rayman* was that the main character had no arms or legs. Rayman had the ability to wind up a punch and send his fist flying the whole way across the screen. And hitting the jump button while in mid-air would trigger Rayman's hair to spin, dropping him gently to the ground like a helicopter. Ancel promises expanded character actions. "We've improved all of Rayman's actions from the original game. Rayman walks, runs, climbs, swims, does loop-de-loops under water, slides, spins, climbs rock faces, and swings from hanging hooks," he says. "He can also grab things, throw them, or use them as weapons." You can also count on Rayman water-skiing with a sea serpent, and riding a cartoony two-legged missile, *Dr. Strangelove*-style.

The use of color is truly extraordinary, and the environments' jutting angles and surreal landscapes are beautiful to behold. Ancel states that the game's artistic vision came from the Russian, Chinese, and Celtic stories he would read as a child, "but with a more contemporary and cartoonish touch. The concept is similar to that of the movie *The Dark Crystal*, with its magic and its Celtic universe."



Rayman 2 features ten levels, ranging from ghostly pirate ships to dank forests and swamps.

Just what the hell *is* Rayman?

Back in the days of the original *Rayman*, my colleagues and I would often have lengthy discussions over what phylum Rayman originated from, and how he managed to have hands and feet, yet no arms or legs. I suggested that the possible interior biological regulation of magnetic forces held him together while my friend argued that Rayman kept himself whole by metaphysical means. I countered by stating that if Rayman had these extrasensory psychic powers, he'd be able to explode his enemies' heads using only the power of his mind.

The debate over how *Rayman* exists without limbs is just as controversial as the argument about where the T-1000 stores its CPU when it morphs into a giant blob.

By spinning his hair, Rayman can slow down the speed of his fall. We could probably rig up something similar for William Shatner, using a lawnmower engine and a steel-reinforced hairpiece.

The first *Rayman* featured some truly bizarre character designs, and the sequel's baddies will be just as interesting. Among the rogue's gallery are piranha, robotic pirates, spectacled gorillas, and zombie chickens. In terms of gameplay, the team's biggest influence was *The Legend of Zelda* on the Super Nintendo — especially its aspect of exploring and finding new powers. "*Zelda* is a linear game, but it doesn't *seem* like it," says Ancel. "The player can walk around, and get stuck as he advances. But by exploring and acquiring objects, the player remembers many places where he was stuck, and can eventually go back and unlock them. We're doing the same thing in *Rayman 2*." The team also cites network *Quake* as inspiration, in terms of raw stress and intensity, and even Indiana Jones is reflected in Rayman's ability to perform a wide variety of daredevil actions in a rhythmic fashion.

Rayman makes his way into a luscious subterranean environment.

Anyone who's played the original *Rayman* can vouch that it was one of the most insanely difficult side-scrollers ever made, topping even the *Mega Man* series in terms of raw, hair pulling frustration. Ancel reports that the difficulty has been toned down for beginning players, but the hard-core group will be satisfied with some optional challenges. "There's a normal way to complete a level, and for the more clever gamers, there are hidden paths which are much tougher to reach," he says. "The average player can walk through the game without seeing *any* of these hidden paths. Rayman's new powers — mainly his shooting abilities — allow him to reach places that are inaccessible at the beginning, which brings a real replay value to the game. We do *not* want to bully the player."

The latest batch of console platformers have benefited from the use of analog gamepads, so *Rayman 2* will support these — along with standard digital control. "Players need to react quickly in *Rayman 2* and the analog controller is very comforting for the player," says Ancel. In terms of tech specs, you should be able to pull between 30 to 60fps on the base system of a Pentium 166, and you'll need to have a Direct3D-compliant video card (though the game is optimized for 3Dfx boards).

Rayman 2 is set for release this spring. If you're on the lookout for a visually stunning platform game with old-school action-adventure elements, we're ready to bet our paychecks that you'll have your hands full with *Rayman 2*.

PCG

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Braveheart

Ever gamer dies...not every gamer really lives

Millions flocked to see this bloodthirsty tribute to one of Scotland's greatest heroes...but can the sweep and grandeur of the film be transformed into a similarly grand game?

—William R. Trotter

Heads rolling, arms flying, detached from their owners...*Braveheart* strives mightily to emulate the power and fury of the battle scenes in Mel Gibson's Oscar-winning movie.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Category: Strategy
Developer: Red Lemon
Publisher: Eidos Interactive, (415) 616-2022
www.eidosinteractive.com
Percentage Complete: 85%

In a nutshell:

Braveheart is more than a simple translation of film-into-game. It simulates the long, turbulent struggle between the Scots and their English oppressors. It covers a *huge* amount of history as well as territory. In addition to medieval combat, it's full of castle-building, diplomacy, and authentic economic models.

What's so special?

If you've seen the movie, you don't have to ask: Blood and thunder in abundance, combined with a truly *vast* free-form campaign that may last generations of game-time. It also marks Eidos Interactive's first venture into historical strategy, and as such, it will be closely watched by fans of the genre.

And when's it coming out?

March.

A lavish, spectacular, historically-authentic movie about a thirteenth century Scots hero whom few Americans had ever heard of? It is to laugh, said the Hollywood moguls...until they learned that the saga of William Wallace was Mel Gibson's personal obsession. Until they realized that the battle scenes (for my money, the greatest since those in *Alexander Nevsky*) would draw in the male audience...and the sight of Mel Gibson in a very short kilt would draw in the females. The result, of course, was an artistic and financial triumph, garnering Oscars aplenty.

Scotland in the late 13th century was a land with a heritage and a coherent culture, but no king. The country was divided into fiefdoms ruled by noble clans, large and small, who spent most of their time squabbling over petty issues of land ownership, some of them feuding violently over a few dozen square miles of grazing land. Some of their quarrels were ancient, and if the clans' leaders had any one quality in common, it was stiff-necked pride.

A small clan army deploys for battle — note the highlighted leader. His command abilities can make the difference between victory and defeat in engagements such as this.

Meanwhile, England had become a unified and powerful kingdom under the shrewd and ruthless leadership of Edward I (popularly known as "Edward Longshanks"). To Edward, it was England's "Manifest Destiny" to unite the

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whole of the Island into one empire Inexorably, Edward expanded north ward, manipulating the clan leaders and winning the covert loyalty of some of the more powerful ones by offering them titles, land, and protection

Braveheart marks a real watershed for Eidos: they've gotten about as much mileage out of Lara Croft's cleavage as they can, and the success of the *Tomb Raider* series has given them the capital to venture into new genres. "Eidos is committed to bringing out quality, innovative games, regardless of genre," says Eric Adams, the game's Associate Producer.

Braveheart is licensed from a little known Scottish development company named Red Lemon. Its chief designer, Andy Campbell, describes the game thusly. "*Braveheart* is a free-form campaign game on a vast scale. As such, it is not based on 'levels' or pre-set 'missions'," he says. "The medieval Scotland we've tried to create is a dynamic, living environment where towns evolve, trade flourishes and fades, wars come and go Nobles will rise and fall as the years pass and alliances are made and broken. This is not a 'weekend war' — a lost battle is not necessarily a lot war. Nor does an isolated victory necessarily bring you closer to the final goal: unity and freedom "

Campbell's design team certain took the term "epic" to heart. *All* of mainland Britain is rendered from satellite data on to a 500-meter grid and is accurate to at least 50 meters. The landscapes are fractally refined to 50 x 50 cm polygons, which adds up to a jaw-dropping total of 650 *billion* polygons for the terrain alone!

Hundreds of authentic towns and villages are modeled, using more than 75 types of buildings, from peasant huts to great fortresses, and as game time passes, each building may be seen in a number of stages of construction (or destruction, given the violence of the times) If you view a castle over a number of years, you'll see its construction from the foundations up. If a church is razed by the fighting, it'll stay in ruins until some clan leader chooses to rebuild it.

Tactics and formations are historically accurate, as is the effect of various leaders on morale and rallying. Armies comprise more than 24 different types of soldiery, ranging from peasant levees to armored heavy cavalry to hulking siege engines. Battlefields can be as large as 10 km and multiple engagements rage back and forth with as many as 1,000 polygonal characters

"A typical 3D scene might contain 32 square km of landscape, 100 characters, 500 trees and bushes, 20 buildings and a castle," Campbell says. "All the soldiers are what I like to call 'skinned and boned', so that when they take battle damage, the effects are quite realistic."

The severed limbs, drooling innards, and crushed skulls depicted so gruesomely in the movie will not be toned down, although, of course, they won't be as up-close and in-your-face as they were in the film.

The third-person camera operates much as the one seen in *Myth*, allowing players to zoom in for close-up views of the gory hand-to-hand battles.

The rich beauty of the Scottish Highlands has been lovingly rendered in *Braveheart*.

Campbell's team has also incorporated 3D environmental sound effects, seasonal weather, and ambient/diffuse light tones that adjust to the time of day. Accurate raycasting gives AI characters full awareness of their environments: units will stalk and try to annihilate weaker units, flee from stronger units, run into fortifications when the situation makes that seem prudent, and will march the quickest route to a location

You begin by choosing which clan leader you'll play. Wallace is one choice, and perhaps the man most motivated by unselfish patriotism. But there are 16 major clans in the game, each with its own strengths and weaknesses, and some have dreams of uniting Scotland under *their* leader's crown. One thing for sure: Longshanks, at least at the start of the game, has a powerful and well-organized army, and unless you can unite enough of the clans under your banner — whatever your motives and however devious your strategy — he'll triumph.

Game time advances in either hourly or daily increments, as you choose. In addition to raising, training, and equipping armies, you'll need to develop your towns and villages to the highest degree of prosperity and contentment you can manage. This part of *Braveheart* looks to have taken its cue from Impressions' *Lords of the Realm*, and if you choose, you can micro-manage your farmers, builders, quarriers, miners, bakers, and armorers to a fine degree of precision. Or, if you want to concentrate purely on the diplomatic and military aspects of the game, you can engage an Auto Management mode that does a reasonably competent job of well-rounded village development.

Covert as well as bloody actions are possible, and very subtly handled. You can raid the enemy's armory, loot his storehouses, or sneak into the town hall and abscond with the taxes. One interesting covert operation involves breaking into the enemy town's prison and trying to free the inmates. Succeed, and the commoners will join your ranks, while any rescued leader will immediately pledge his loyalty and you can (probably) count on his services for the duration

When the game segues into real-time combat, Red Lemon uses a multiple-angle camera engine, allowing you to view the action in first or third-person modes, or from a follow-cam perspective. The third-person view gives you freedom to roam the field at will, from ground level to a bird's-eye view.

As for its historical accuracy, well, the game has the official approval of the Clans Association of Scotland, an old and proud organization that does not hand out such accolades lightly. "Seamus Wallace of the Clan Wallace, who is head of the Clan Wallace Trust, did a great deal of technical advisory work for the movie," Adams says. "He's an expert in the historical background and clan politics of the era. Both he and the Clans Association have given the game their blessing — no small compliment, because no commercial organization can legally use historically correct tartans without their permission. We must be doing something right." And — just to answer the question that must be on your mind: the infamous "kilt-mooning" scene will indeed be included in the game, if you choose to switch that mode on.... PCG

The army roster for the Clan Stewart: note that some units are off on diplomatic missions, others are guarding caravans or garrisoning towns, and only a few are actually raiding and fighting.

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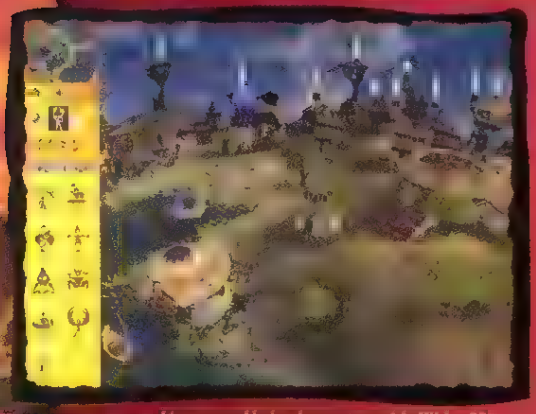
POPULOUS 11:24
Pity the mortal that trespasses against you
for he shall be set adrift on rivers of fire
and his dwellings laid waste.

The World Is Yours.

[illegible] and strike down the nonbelievers.

[illegible] View every inch of the world and its inhabitants in swirling real-time.



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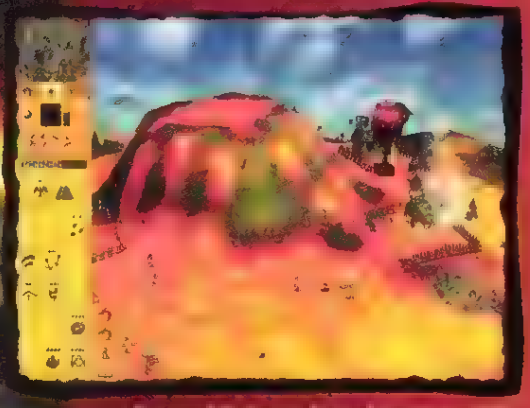

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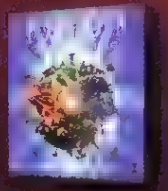

BULLFROG

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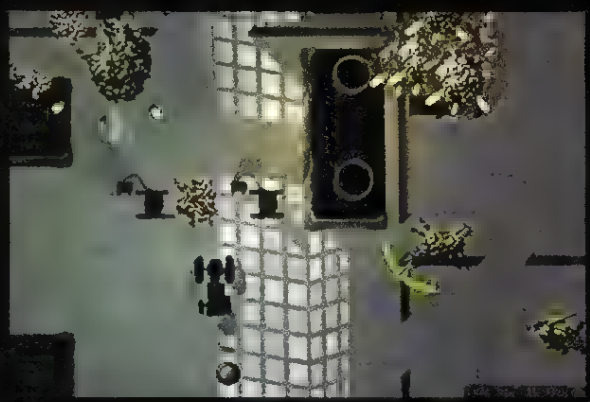
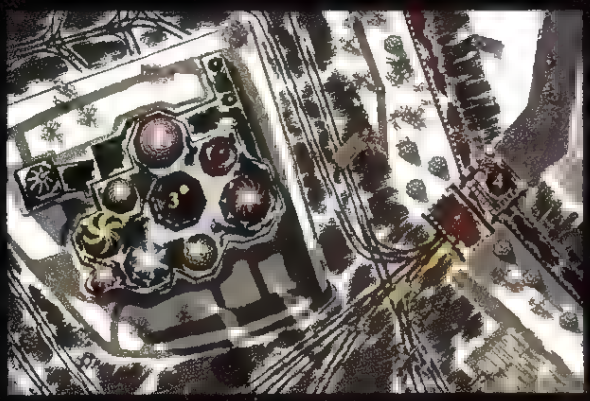
1941 to 1945. Four grueling years of war. Four dramatically different seasons. From mind-numbingly cold winters to impossible-to-budge muddy springs. Every weather change comes with a new set of problems. You won't make it if you aren't prepared.



Day one. You're a low-ranking commander. But keep your troops from fleeing or getting killed and you'll soon find yourself advancing in rank and commanding more units.

As the front-line commander, all eyes are on you. Ask your soldiers to do something silly and you can expect a mutiny. But with every battle you win, their morale gets better. Bringing a whole new meaning to survival of the fittest.



As the war drags on, the technology gets better. You can choose between rocket artillery, off-map artillery, flamethrowers and 80 different vehicles, to name just a few. Not to mention over 300 squad types and 60 different kinds of soldiers.

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Fallout 2

A POST NUCLEAR ROLE PLAYING GAME

"The game has robbed me totally of a social life and I am beginning to deeply resent anything that takes me away from playing it."

9 out of 10

– Games Mania

"Don't be surprised if you dream of stimpacks and frantically searching for ammo for your submachine gun."

8.5 out of 10

– Online Gaming Review

"Fallout 2 is undeniably entertaining. In fact, it's addictive."

★★★★½

– [illegible]

"With a great depth of gameplay, lots of clever additions, and some really worthwhile plotlines, Fallout 2 is a terrific sequel."

– Next Generation Online

"It has been quite some time since I have played a game that I am so enthusiastic about. Check this one out —you'll love it."

– Happy Puppy

www.interplay.com/fallout2

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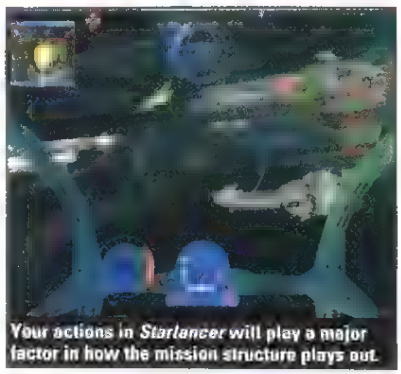
Hammer Time!

Digital Anvil is pounding away on three new titles

When Chris Roberts, best known for creating the immensely popular Wing Commander series, formed Digital Anvil, Microsoft was quick to snatch up the new development company. Little was heard from Roberts' company after the deal, but now DA has opened its doors and taken the wraps off its first batch of titles — and it looks like 'The Big M' may be rewarded handsomely for its faith in Roberts.



Your actions in *Starlancer* will play a major factor in how the mission structure plays out.

First up is *Conquest: Frontier Wars* (the title may yet change for legal reasons) and is due sometime in the fall of 1999. This real-time strategy game focuses on space combat in a 3D environment. *Conquest* offers solo gamers two distinctly different factions (multiplay will feature four) to lead through the world-conquering and colonizing missions. A unique element lets the player place his fleets in the hands of the Fleet Admiral, an autonomous commander that will improve through experience and gain advanced tactics as he gains in rank.

Loose Cannon is also scheduled for the fall, but may slip until later in the year. This action/adventure game puts the player in the role of Ashe, a bounty hunter in pursuit of Bishop, the leader of a criminal syndicate. The 20 mandatory missions and numerous sub-missions will have the player traversing the United States, visiting 12 country-side areas and nine cities, either on foot or in the one of the 15 customizable vehicles. The cities will be alive with pedestrians, realistic traffic, and working police forces. Missions will include reconnaissance, hostage rescues, and *PC Gamer*'s favorite, assassinations.

The final 1999 title, set for a Holiday release, is *Starlancer*. This space shooter (which looks a little reminiscent of Wing Commander) will pit competing nations such as the United States, China, Russia, and England in a battle for the solar system. The missions will be non-linear, with the players' accomplishments affecting the flow of the story. There will be more than a dozen different ships to fly, equipped with more than 20 weapons like Nova Cannons, Pulse Lasers, and Jack Hammer Missiles.

From the very early looks we've had, all three games have a lot of potential to wow gamers in 1999. Keep an eye out for more detailed previews in the pages of *PC Gamer* soon.

***Conquest: Frontier Wars* will let you roam the seas of space, battling your enemies with all manner of weaponry, including cloaking warships and heavily armed battleships.**

The interactive cities of *Loose Cannon* will feature pedestrians, vehicle traffic, and a police force to try and keep crime under control.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Oni

Myth II **isn't the only new game from Bungie Software. Due for release sometime later in 1999 is *Oni*, a third-person action game set in a 3D anime world, featuring a female martial arts specialist known as Konoko. Gunplay will also be part of Konoko's arsenal, but when the ammo runs out, the game's engine allows for what Bungie is calling "full contact action." As the game progresses, your fighting skills will improve, letting you perform spectacular flying kicks and throws. The environment can also be used to your advantage. Objects can be flung into the path of pursuers to slow them down, or you can inflict additional damage on your foe by flinging him into a pile of crates. The artificial intelligence of the enemies promises to be quite challenging too, as they take advantage of cover, communicate, coordinate, and hunt you down anywhere in the gameworld. Multi-play will consist of deathmatch as well as cooperative play, although no word has been given yet as to the number of players or if Internet play will be supported.**

The environments in *Oni* will be highly interactive. Objects can be used to evade or injure your opponents, and hiding in the shadows will be a viable strategy.

Darkstone

In development by Delphine Software (of *Moto Racer GP* and *Fade to Black* fame) and to be published by Take Two Interactive, *Darkstone* is an action game with roleplaying elements set in a medieval world. The player will control two characters simultaneously (from a

Continued on page 49

Daikatana defections

Mass exodus of senior Ion Storm staff

Ion Storm, the ambitious development house founded by John Romero, has some major restructuring to do. A rash of employee defections has hit the company, primarily coming from the teams that were working on the company's two most anticipated games, *Daikatana* and *Anachronox*.

A total of 10 people have jumped ship, among them the lead programmer and lead level designer on *Daikatana*, as well as the lead level designer for *Anachronox*. The rest of the group includes additional level designers, programmers, artists, and the audio director for both projects.

Romero remained pragmatic, even upbeat about the news. "Thankfully, the *Daikatana* team members that decided to leave and start their own company left at an opportune time," he said. "Most of the levels are in a final state, much of the coding has been completed for most of the game, and almost all the music has been done. Everyone that left made significant contributions to the project and I am thankful to have had them on my team. Thanks for everything guys!"

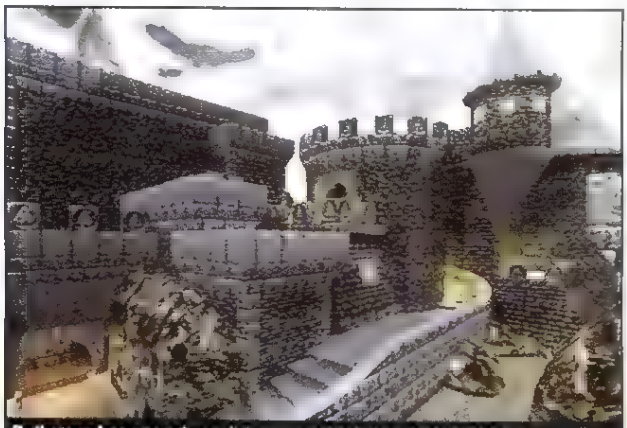
Eight of the Ion Storm employees (see sidebar) have formed a new development group called Bloodshot Entertainment. The new startup has already found a publisher and is currently working on its first title. Bloodshot will be joining Gathering of Developers to develop a game based on the rock band Kiss' "Psycho Circus" comic series by Todd McFarlane. The game will be a first-person shooter featuring the band. We'll have further news on this game in future issues.

Another major defector is Corinne Yu, the director of technology for Ion Storm. Yu will be moving over to 3D Realms, where she'll be in charge of a group focusing on efforts to develop a new 3D engine. The plan is for this new technology to be used in the next Duke Nukem game (the one after the upcoming *Duke Nukem Forever*).

Shelter from the Storm

Bloodshot Entertainment includes the following

Jonathan Wright – Lead Programmer, *Daikatana*
Sverre Kvernmo – Lead Level Designer, *Daikatana*
David Namaksy – Lead Level Designer, *Anachronox*
Will Loconto – Audio Director for both projects
Mike Maynard – Programmer, *Daikatana*
Steve Rescoe – Level Designer, *Daikatana*
Matt Hooper – Level Designer, *Daikatana*
Mark Morgan – Artist, *Daikatana*



***Daikatana* has gone through innumerable delays, but Ion Storm is confident that the recent departures won't add to the wait.**

Sierra Sold? Oui!

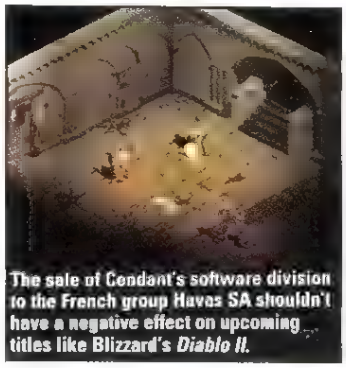
Cendant's software division bought by French group

The Cendant Corporation has announced an agreement to sell its consumer software division, which includes Sierra On-Line, Blizzard Entertainment, Davidson & Associates, and Knowledge Adventure, to Havas SA, a Paris based media group.

The deal, worth nearly $1 billion, must go through customary regulatory channels, but both companies expect the sale to be completed sometime in the first quarter of 1999. The news for Cendant is not all good though, since the value of this transaction is much less than the $2.2 billion the company paid in 1996 for Sierra and Blizzard.

Cendant was hoping to rid itself of the entire software division, and the deal with Havas SA allows the company to avoid the piecemeal breakup that Virgin Interactive was forced to endure when Electronic Arts cherry-picked the company's prime nibs a couple of months ago.

Havas SA is one of France's largest publishers of reference and educational software through its Havas Interactive division, but its main operations are in the newspaper and magazine business. The day-to-day operation of the newly bought software companies is expected to remain mostly undisturbed.



The sale of Cendant's software division to the French group Havas SA shouldn't have a negative effect on upcoming titles like Blizzard's *Diablo II*.

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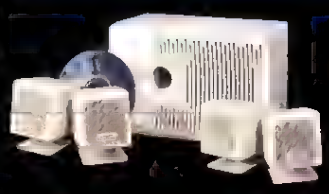

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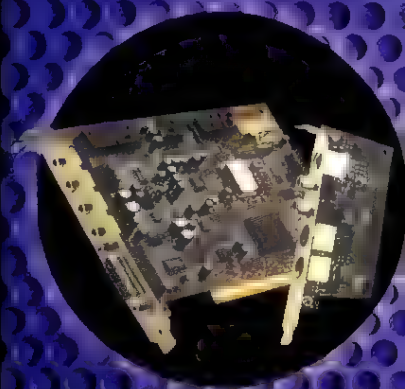

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PC Gamer, May 1998
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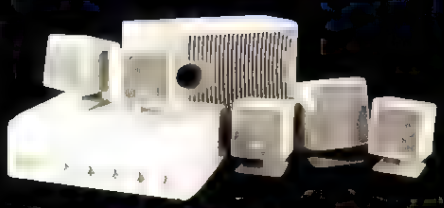

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5-Star Gameworthy Review,
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Inside Interplay

New funding, new titles, and a name change for one of its divisions

Last month, we reported that Interplay Entertainment was in some financial trouble, and that the company was looking to obtain additional credit. Chairman and CEO Brian Fargo even went so far as to offer $5 million of his own money as collateral for the new funding.

Well, it looks like Fargo's faith in his company has been rewarded, as Interplay has announced that it has secured an increase to its credit line, and will get an influx of $9.7 million in the first 90 days of the extension. This additional capital should ease the company's cashflow problems and hopefully keep any more games that were in jeopardy of being cancelled on the release schedule.

Some more good news – the company has acquired five new titles from UK-based developer Gremlin Interactive. The games are a mix of PC and console titles, and include *Actua Tennis*, *R.I.O.T.*, *Soulbringer*, *Whiplash 2*, and *Tanktics*. These games are the fulfillment of a publishing agreement signed in 1995 by the two companies. Said Brian Fargo, "This agreement allows us to continue the great relationship that we have enjoyed with Gremlin in the past, and provides the company with titles, including some that were not previously planned for, that will be included in our release schedule for 1999."

***Actua Tennis* is one of five games from Gremlin Interactive that Interplay will publish in the United States in 1999, along with a batch of other new sports titles.**

Finally, Interplay has announced that its sports division, formerly known as VR Sports, will be changing its name to Interplay Sports. Paul Sackman, director of marketing for the newly-named division said, "It makes sense to leverage the great equity of the Interplay name. We feel that we are an asset to Interplay, and they are an asset to us. This reinforces our synergistic relationship." According to Sackman, several new sports titles will be announced in the coming months, with a focus on appealing to many different market segments already in place, although the game is not scheduled for release until the middle of 2000. No word yet on whether former SEAL and current governor of Minnesota, Jesse "The Mind" Ventura will be making a cameo appearance.

In the Navy

Sierra announces Navy SEALS game

Sierra division Yosemite Entertainment is the latest company to license the *Unreal* engine, and will use it to develop a squad-based, tactical simulation game called *Navy SEALs*. The game's missions will be based on the career of former SEAL Richard Marcinko, best known for his Rogue Warrior series of novels.

Navy SEALs will put the player in the role of team commander. Action will be a large part of the gameplay, but as commander, you'll also be responsible for choosing your team members, equipping them for the mission at hand, and directing their actions.

Craig Alexander, the general manager of Yosemite, said, "All of us in the industry have been intensely interested in the potential of the *Unreal* engine, but we are taking more than a 'wait and see' position. We are moving ahead."

The team that will be designing *Navy SEALs* is

***Navy SEALs* will be a squad-based game using the *Unreal* engine from Yosemite Entertainment.**

Continued from page 48

choice of eight) in a quest to collect the seven magic crystals of the mystical Orb in order to defeat the evil wizard Drakk. Story originality may be lacking, but *Darkstone*'s quest generator should provide plenty of replay value; each game will consist of more than 30 randomly generated levels, complete with some 80 monster types and dozens of weapons and spells. The 3D graphics will support accelerators via Direct3D, and the player will be in full control of the camera during play. Cooperative Internet and LAN play will also be supported when *Darkstone* is released this April.

RollerCoaster Tycoon

Sometime in 1999, Hasbro Interactive will be bringing us *RollerCoaster Tycoon* from Chris Sawyer, the man responsible for *Transport Tycoon*. The game sounds a little like a modern day update to the Bullfrog classic *Theme Park*, but hey, there's nothing wrong with that. In addition to designing thrill-packed rollercoasters loaded with loops and corkscrews, the player must manage a thriving amusement park filled with a variety of rides and attractions, and keep the customers flowing through the gates.

In addition to standard rollercoasters, *RollerCoaster Tycoon* will let you design the inverted, suspended, and bobsled varieties.

Man of War 2

Strategy First is preparing an April release for its follow-up to the high seas combat game *Man of War*. Three styles of play will be available through 20 historical scenarios. As Fleet Admiral, you'll have to devise a strategy from a high-level command per-

Continued on page 50

Continued from page 49

spective for your entire fleet. In the role of Division Commander, you'll be in charge of your own ship as well as a smaller squadron under your direct command. You can also choose to focus on captaining one vessel, responding to the Admiral's commands while making choices such as what type of shot to fire and making sure your crew keeps your boat afloat. *Man of War 2* will include a character creator, a scenario editor, as many as 32 ships to choose from and multi-play over the Internet or via LAN.

Man of War 2 will include a first-person perspective for captaining your vessel, and as time goes by, day will pass into night.

Clans

Another upcoming title from Strategy First is *Clans*. This mix of adventure and roleplaying is along the lines of Blizzard's *Diablo*, casting you as a champion of the clans, sent out to battle a demon whose dirty work included turning the once peaceful clans against each other. Four character classes, nine quests through thousands of screens of the gameworld, and plenty of monster bashing and spell casting are all on tap. Four-player cooperative and deathmatch play will be included when *Clans* is ready for release this April. PCG

Clans will have bells and whistles such as 16-bit color and dynamic lighting, but 3D acceleration will not be necessary.

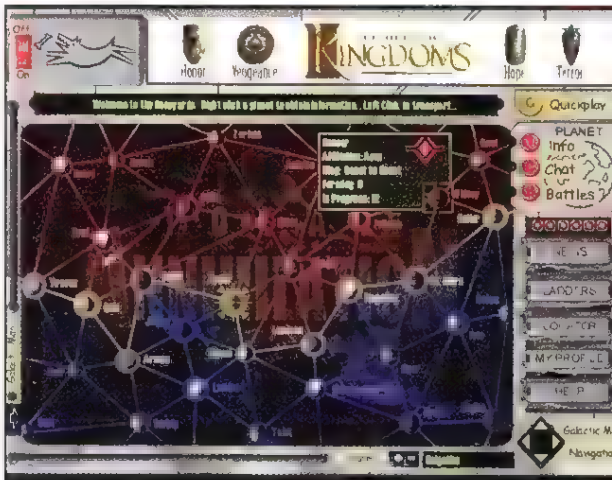
Cavedog Throws Us a Bone

Set to start a new online community called 'Boneyards'

Cavedog Entertainment, developer of the extremely popular real-time strategy game *Total Annihilation*, has announced a new online venture for fans of its current and future games. Going by the name of *Boneyards*, this online supplement to the company's retail products will provide a meeting place for gamers that want to find opponents and participate in special events.

The service may already be available by the time you read this. Cavedog's Brandon Smith couldn't give an exact date for the launch, saying that early January is the target date, but it's dependent on how well the beta test, which started in early December, goes.

Boneyards will be more than just a meeting place for players of Cavedog's games. The big attraction for *Total Annihilation* freaks will be Galactic Wars. Upon entering, the player will be asked to choose a side, either the Arm or the Core. As a lowly private, the player will strive to increase in rank by engaging the enemy in combat. The game takes place on a galactic map consisting of 50 to 70 interconnected worlds. When a campaign begins, the worlds will be divided equally between the two sides, and as the sides meet, the particular world will be considered "in contention". The battle will begin (and it can be more than just one-on-one combat) for the control of the planet, with the victor winning the world for his side. A particular campaign will end when one side has claimed the predetermined number of worlds.



The main interface of *Boneyards* will provide the player with information determining which planets are 'in contention'.

Players will be given a briefing upon entering the game, informing them of the enemy's position, and which worlds should be protected. Every planet will also feature a distinct map, taken from the original game and its expansion packs, and may enforce specific rules and unit restrictions. At the end of each game day, the victories and defeats will be tallied, and the game will update player rankings and show which worlds have changed hands.

For those who would rather not get involved in a huge war, *Total Annihilation* will still be supported on the other gaming networks such as Heat.net and Microsoft's MSN Gaming Zone, and the players can opt to play any of the world maps at *Boneyards* without affecting the war.

As future Cavedog games are released, such as *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms*, *Amen: The Awakening*, *Elysium*, and *Good & Evil*, *Boneyards* support will be built into the retail product. For now though, *Total Annihilation* owners will need to go to *www.cavedog.com* in order to upgrade their copy to a *Boneyards*-compatible version.

Making Tracks

GT Interactive announces new internal developer

The ranks of GT Interactive are swelling once again, as the steadily growing publishing giant announces a new internal development team by the name of Bootprint Entertainment.

Bootprint Entertainment will be headed by Rod Nakamoto, former executive producer at Origin, and responsible for the two latest games in the Wing Commander series, *Prophecy* and *Secret Ops*. At startup, Bootprint is a 16-person operation divided into two teams, but that number is expected to increase to 30 in January. The first project for the startup will be a character-based, action/strategy game scheduled for the year 2000. Work on a proprietary engine for the game is in progess.

Nakamoto, who has the title of Vice President and General Manager, said, "At Bootprint, our goal is to use leading-edge technology to create products that stand out in consumers' eyes as entertainment not just for today, but for their long-term enjoyment.

New developer Bootprint Entertainment will be guided by Rod Nakamoto, whose most recent credits include *Wing Commander: Prophecy*.

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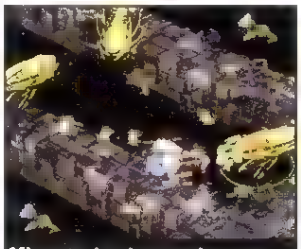
Cease and Desist

Blizzard gets injunction against level bundler

The legal tussle between Blizzard Entertainment and Microstar Software has been resolved, with the latter being ordered to cease the distribution and sale of its unauthorized add-on disc for *StarCraft*, called *Stellar Forces*.

Microstar has also agreed to destroy all remaining inventory of the product, and will pay Blizzard an undisclosed amount of money. Just a couple of months ago, GT Interactive also won a case against Microstar for distributing an unauthorized level collection for *Duke Nukem 3D*, so maybe this time Microstar will get the point.

Paul Sams, vice president of business development for Blizzard said, "Blizzard filed this suit to prove that end-user license agreements are indeed enforceable. We as a publisher have the right to control who uses our content and for what purposes. We will continue to aggressively defend our properties so we can prevent the makers of unauthorized products from misleading our customers and damaging the Blizzard label."



Microstar has lost another court case, this time to Blizzard, for its unauthorized *StarCraft* level pack, *Stellar Forces*.

Optimism at Interactive Magic

Company predicts profitability by the second quarter of 1999

Interactive Magic has just posted yet another losing quarter, with net losses equaling $3.5 million, but company founder "Wild Bill" Stealey predicts that 1999 will be a much better year. "We expect 1999 to be our best year yet," he says.

According to Stealey, Interactive Magic will be concentrating heavily on the Internet in the upcoming year. The first step in this process has been the company's acquisition of MPG-Net, an online service that has been around since 1989. MPG-Net's content and technology (which includes the likes of *Drakkar*, a fantasy roleplaying game, *Operation Market Garden*, a military strategy game, and Interactive Magic's own popular, pay-to-play flight simulator *Warbirds*) will be merged with iMagic Online.

To make the new iMagic Online a more customer-friendly site, the company is set to implement a new game-launching application called iLZ. The program will be compatible with any Internet-capable game, and will act as a matching service whisking the player to Interactive Magic's web site, similar to Blizzard's battle.net service.

Meanwhile, Interactive Magic has consolidated its internal development teams, and two early-in-development titles have been shelved, which has eliminated 20 internal development positions. Ten of these spots will be filled by former MPG-Net employees to expand the online content. To find out more, visit the company's web site at *www.magicgames.com*.

The popular online flight simulator *Warbirds* will be joined on Interactive Magic's web site by the contents of MPG-Net.

www.shadowcompany.com

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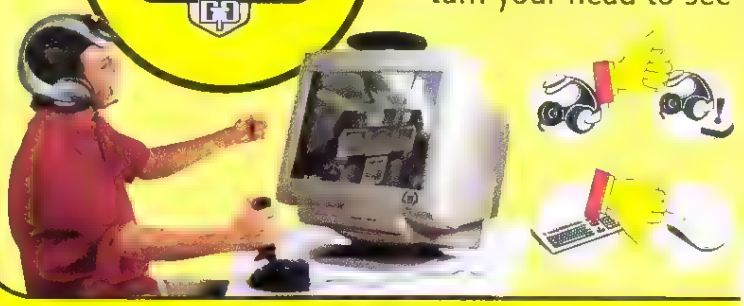

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A Core Coup

Monolith picks up the rights to Septerra Core

Monolith Productions, in an agreement with German publishing company TopWare Interactive, has acquired the rights to publish *Septerra Core*, the Japanese anime-style roleplaying game from developer Valkyrie Studios (best known for its excellent adventure game *Beavis and Butthead in Virtual Stupidity*). Daniel Bernstein, director of product acquisitions for Monolith said, "We are delighted to be able to partner with TopWare Interactive to bring this much anticipated title to the game community."

Despite much positive press and consumer anticipation, Valkyrie has had a tough time finding a publisher for the title. But with the announcement of this deal it finally seems as though *Septerra Core* is entering the home stretch, and the team can concentrate on getting the game completed for its projected fall release date.

The rich story line and eye-pleasing anime graphics of *Septerra Core* should make it a favorite of roleplaying fans everywhere.

The Ever-Expanding EA

MGM to join up with Electronic Arts

MGM Interactive, the gaming arm of film giant Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Electronic Arts, the world's largest entertainment software company, have entered into an agreement where EA will distribute upcoming titles from MGM Interactive. The deal covers both PC and videogame platforms on a worldwide basis, with EA taking over all sales, marketing and distribution efforts, as well as offering advice on product development.

The new games to be released under the deal will include the James Bond license *Tomorrow Never Dies* due in August. *Rollerball* (based on the cult 1970s film) and *Too Human*, an action game set in the year 2450, putting the player in the role of a policeman investigating the death of a fellow officer. The last two games are scheduled for release during the 1999 Holiday season. All of the games from MGM will also be available for the PlayStation.

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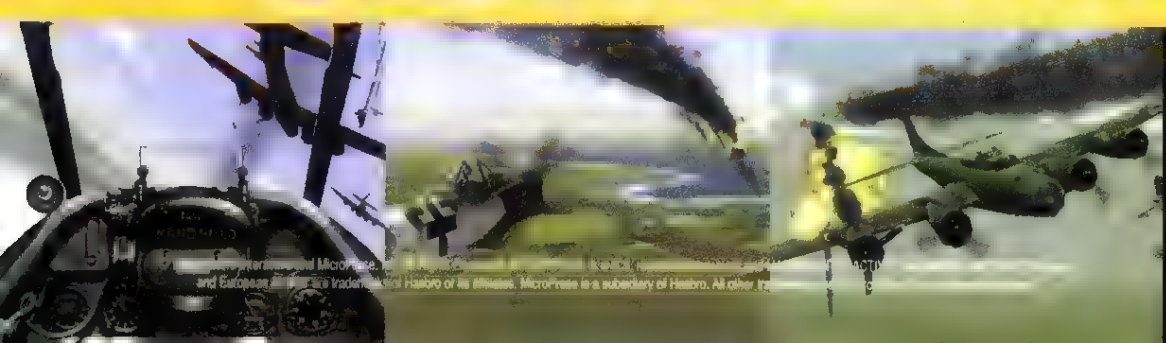

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The PC Gamer Playlist

What's hot at the magazine's offices this month.

The month of February contains one of the most hated days to die-hard PC gamers — Saint Valentine's Day. Not only do you have to endure the over-the-top advertising campaigns to get you [illegible] silly expect you to take time away from your gaming habit to spend time with them! We feel that gamers deserve their own special day — Saint Carmack's Day, or Saint Meier's Day, perhaps?

This, of course, would be a national holiday — the latest, hottest games would be exchanged by all as a sign of their affections, and sitting at your PC and playing the games all day would be the expected observance. Ah, what a wonderful world that would be. Our own Jay Vidheecharoen, self-professed Valentine hater, will be leading this movement, so write your congressman, and let's get the wheels turning on this one!

1.	*Half-Life*	*Everybody*
2.	*Heretic II*	*Billy, MLuton*
3.	*NBA Live 99*	*Rob, Dean*
4.	*European Air War*	*Dan, Todd*
5.	*Return to Krondor*	*Wolf, Lisa*
6.	*WWII Fighters*	*Gary, Dan*
7.	*Delta Force*	*Gary, Todd*
8.	*Railroad Tycoon II*	*Rob, Gary*
9.	*Tomb Raider III*	*Rob*
10.	*Barbie Nail Designer*	*Fancy Man*

News Briefs

Goal!

It looks like Electronic Arts is trying to corner the market on Soccer licenses. The company has recently acquired the rights to the next two World Cups, the next European Championships in the year 2000, and the Bundesliga the top soccer league in Germany. To further ensure that the EA Sports line of soccer games dominate the market, the FIFA license has been extended by eight years

A Done Deal

Eidos Interactive has finally completed its acquisition of Crystal Dynamics The deal cost Eidos Interactive $47 5 million, half of which was paid out of existing cash reserves, while the rest will be tendered in April. The key properties in the purchase include the Gex and Legacy of Kain series of games

Suck it Down, Romero!

If you were offended by the "John Romero's going to make you his bitch" advertisement for *Daikatana* which ran a few months back, now's your chance to get some payback Eidos Interactive Mplayer and Ion Storm are sponsoring a deathmatch tournament where the winner will get to go to Dallas to play John Romero at *Daikatana*. In order to participate you must sign up with Mplayer and download the *Daikatana* demo. The availability date of the demo still remains unknown, but the contest is scheduled to begin on February 12th. Besides the chance to make Romero your bitch, the winner will get a top-of-the-line Falcon Northwest system and a replica *Daikatana* sword, while the runners-up will be rewarded with Voodoo 2 accelerators and Mplayer jackets

http://www.pcgame.com

Some Fight for Freedom With Petitions and Pleas.

Braveheart's™ real-time 3D strategy engine offers unparalleled combat realism with hundreds of controllable on-screen warrio

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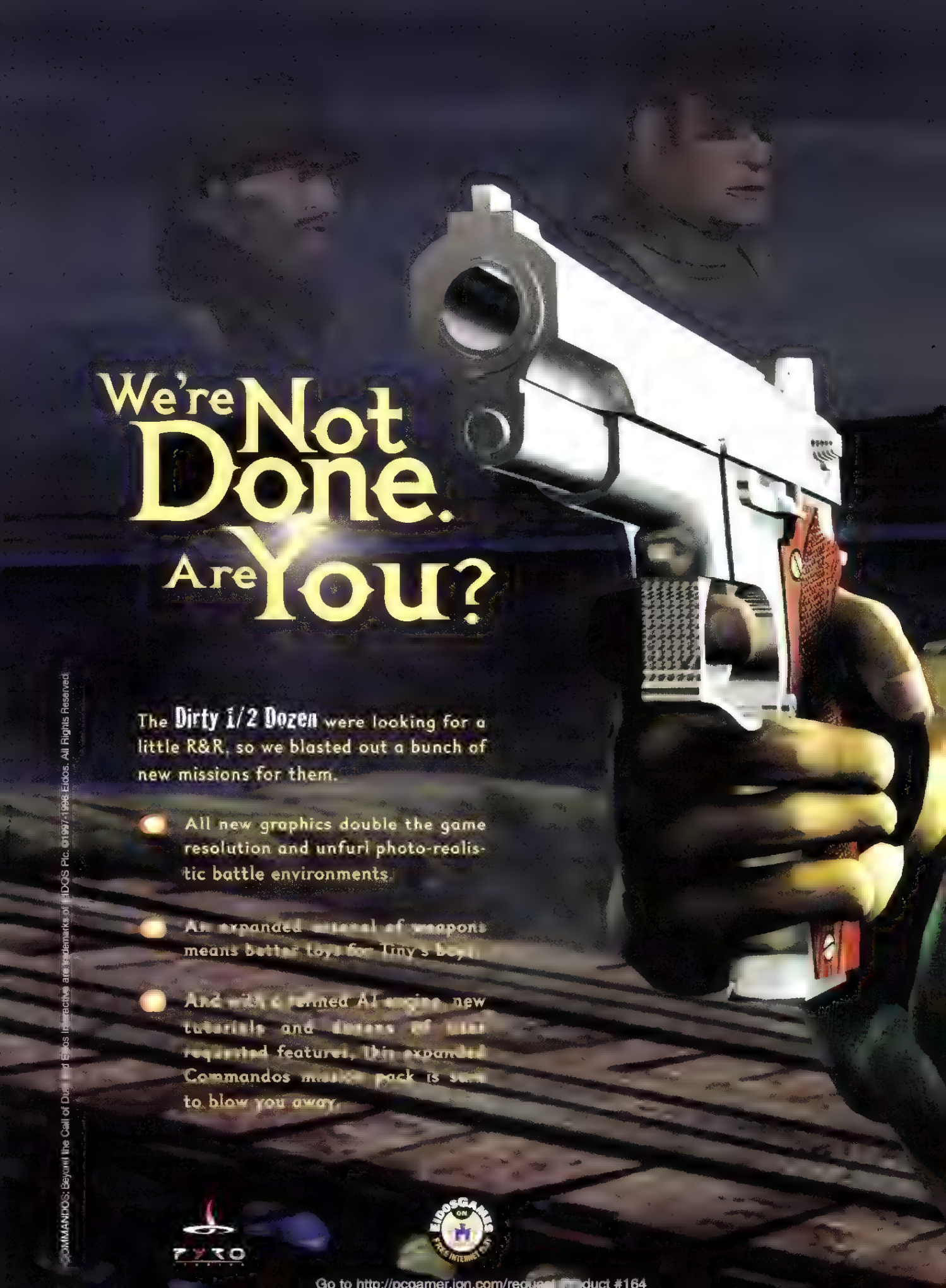
We're Not Done. Are You?
The Dirty 1/2 Dozen were looking for a little R&R, so we blasted out a bunch of new missions for them.
All new graphics double the game resolution and unfurl photo-realistic battle environments.
An expanded arsenal of weapons means better toys for Tiny's boys.
And with a retrained AI engine, new tutorials and dozens of user requested features, this expanded Commandos mission pack is sure to blow you away.
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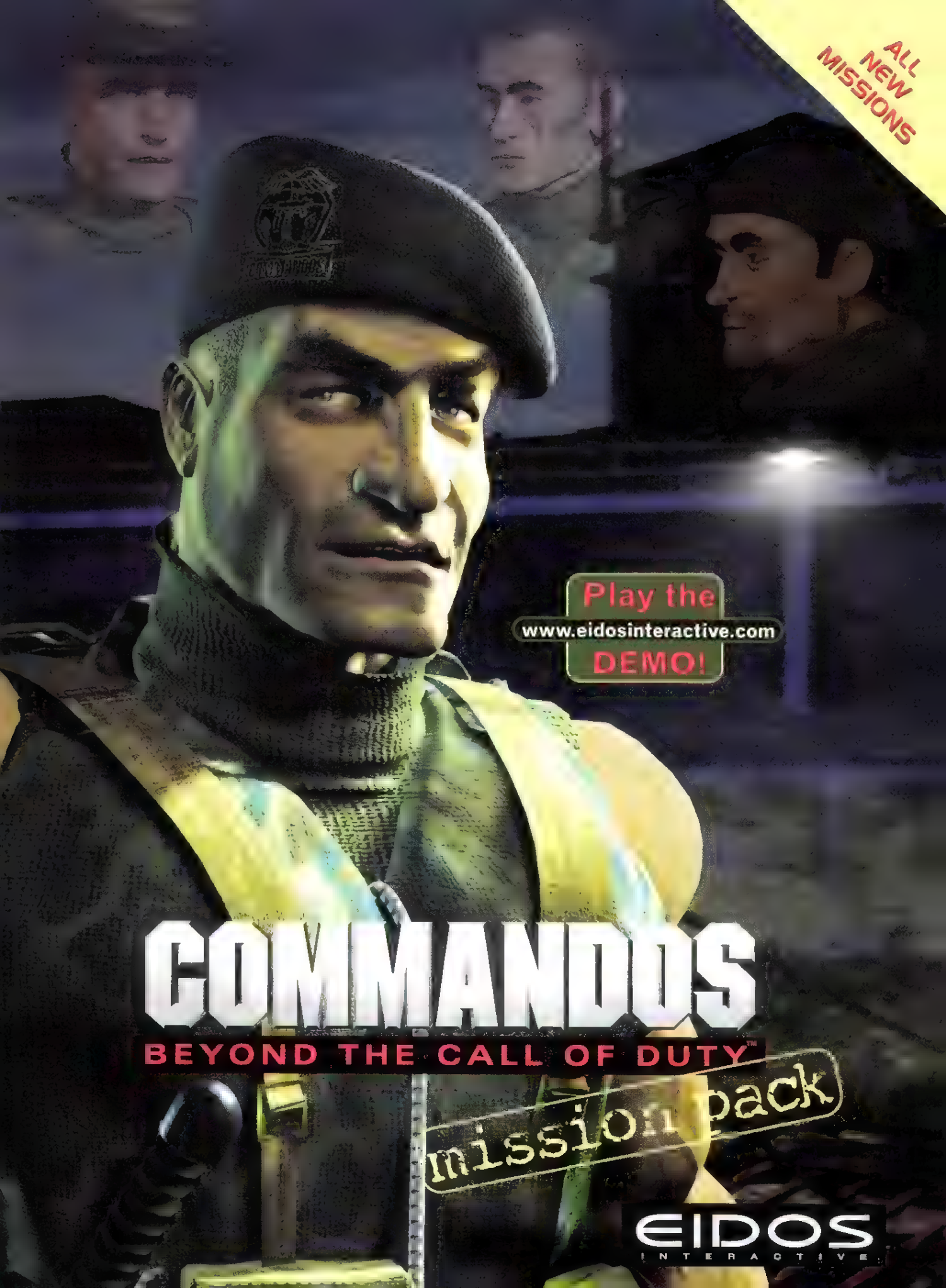
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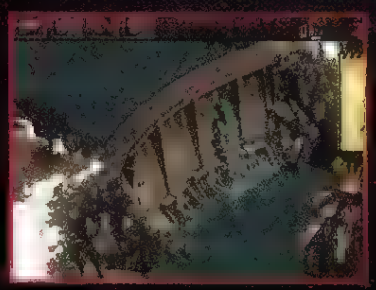
-Imagine Games Network



"Commandos is a **great game!**"

-Gamecenter

"Slick, Different, and Innovative"

-Computer Gaming World

"A **genuinely original** game of tactics, planning, and precision."

-Gamespot

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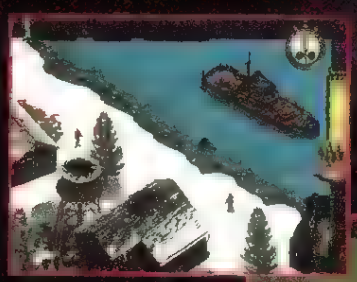

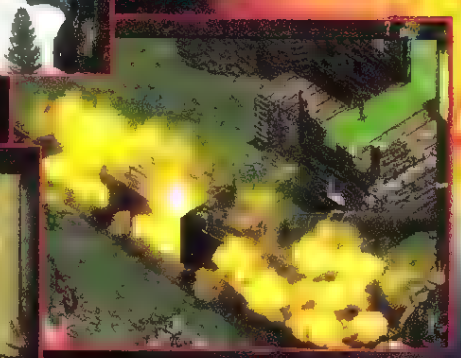

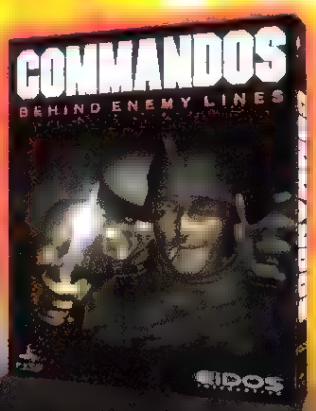

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THE ultim STRATEGY

Looking for help with the PC's most popular games? Don't look any further! We've got all you need to climb (or cheat) your way to victory right here.

Blood II
PAGE 80

Caesar III
PAGE 108

Cheaters' Corner
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Delta Force
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Grim Fandango
PAGE 118

Half-Life
PAGE 64

Railroad Tycoon II
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Sin
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Shogo
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Tomb Raider III
PAGE 98

ate 1999 guide

Half-Life

Sierra's awesome 3D action game is just too darn big for us to walk you through in one chunk, so this month we'll take you to around the halfway point, then we'll finish up next month. Go, go, go!

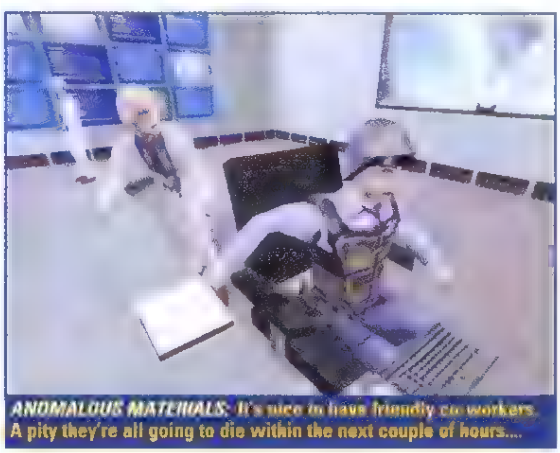
Welcome to the exciting and sexy world of Anomalous Materials Handling! You're Gordon Freeman, MIT graduate and brainy physicist, and you're about to have a really bad day at the office. You work at the Black Mesa Research Base, which is about to be transformed into Hell on Earth!

Anomalous Materials

After a long and enlightening train ride, it's time for you to show up to work. Wait for the guard to open the door, then head through the metal doors. Get chatty with the security guard at the desk (and press the red button under his keyboard for a surprise), then turn down the hallway to the right. Follow the green stripe on the wall, then head down the ramp to the right. Follow the green stripe until you get to the locker room. Find the locker marked *Freeman*, and open it up. Check out Gordon's reading material (*the 37th Mandala* by Valve employee Marc Laidlaw), then head to the room on the left. Hit the button on the console, and grab your new friend, the HEV suit. Head back the way you came, then follow the blue stripe down the hallway. The security guard will pop his head into the retinal scanner and let you through a pair of doors. Walk through, then take the elevator down (don't forget about using the *action* key to trigger buttons). Keep making your way through the complex until you get to the test chamber.

Once inside, follow your scientist buddies' orders, climb the ladder, and fire up the rotors. Climb back down and push the mysterious sample into the beam. Then stand back and watch as the poop hits the fan!

ANOMALOUS MATERIALS: No! No! You weren't supposed to push the sample into the beam! Good job, Gordon — you've just signed the death warrant for all of your fellow employees.



ANOMALOUS MATERIALS: It's nice to have friendly co-workers. A pity they're all going to die within the next couple of hours....

Unforeseen Consequences

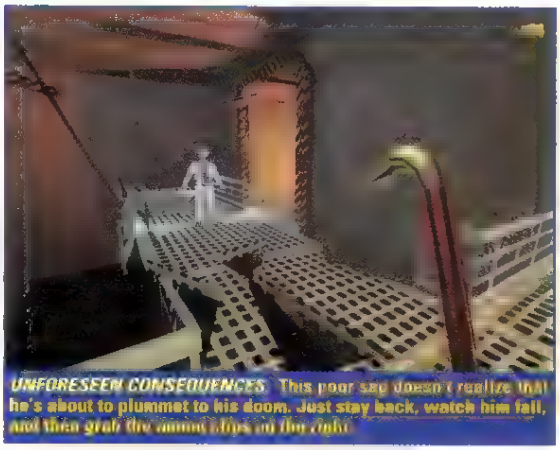
Oh, the fools just wouldn't listen! It's too late now, though. Head back through the doors you entered through, and use the retinal scanner. Walk through, and survey the damage. Make your way through the ruins, take the elevator up, and chat with the two scientists standing under the broken console. Get the attention of the uninjured scientist, who will open the exit door for you. Be careful in the next room — electrical bolts will surge through the window, frying anything in their path. Wait for the bolts to blow the exit door, then walk through. Run through the next room, avoiding the headcrab that drops from the ceiling. Sprint past the lasers, then grab your first weapon — the almighty crowbar. Smash your way into the next room, then trigger the elevator. Apologize to the scientists on the way down, then break through the glass door and climb the access ladder to your left. Help out the security guard once you reach the top, assisting him in killing the zombies with your crowbar. Hit the *use* key so he'll follow you around — he should take out two more zombies headed your way in the next hall. Head back to the locker room and grab some pistol rounds from the locker with the name *Guthrie* and a battery from your own locker. Heal up in the bathroom at the first aid station, if necessary.

UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES: If you wait for this guard to be resuscitated, he'll be able to follow you for some much-needed backup.

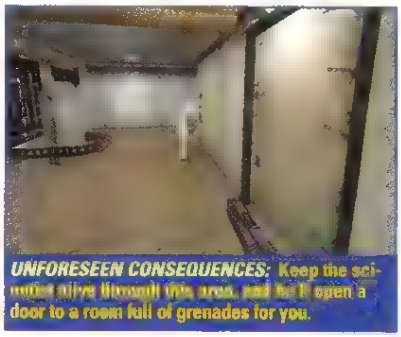
Make your way back to the main lobby. Kill the headcrab that pops out of the exploding grate to your right. Smash the control panel to the right of the entry doors, walk through the doors that open, then bid a fond

farewell to a fellow scientist about to meet his doom. Grab some clips from the fallen guard on the right. Head back to the lobby, then crouch and enter the computer room. Crouch-jump onto the toppled computer at the back of the room, then hop across and use the other as a ramp. Drop from the ventilation duct into the next room. Be wary of the fallen duct directly across from you — a head crab is inside. Check out the squirming scientist in the red-lit room to your right, then continue on. Grab the gun from the fallen guard, and heal up. Crawl under the broken door, then trigger the second door. Hang a right into the next room.

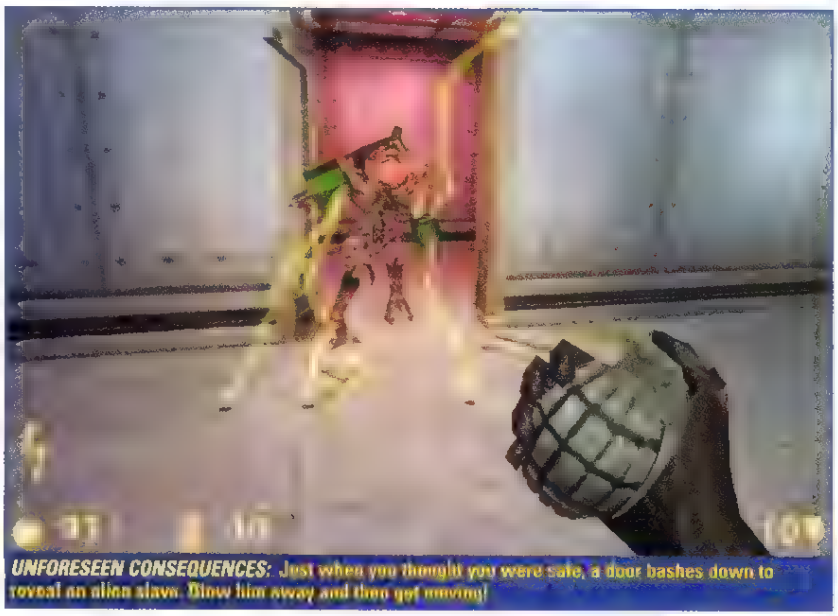
D'oh, it's a bunch of houndeyes! Blast them with your piece, then move on to the next room, where you'll be attacked by two more. Head through the metal door with the poison symbol, kill the headcrab inside, then climb the ladder. The second you get to the top, squeeze off a round into the explosive canisters and drop back down. After the mayhem stops, grab the scientist in the side room to the right, and head across the catwalk. There's a zombie toying with a dead scientist in the next room — waste him. The scientist should make himself useful by opening a door to a mini-armory. Go inside and grab the grenades. Head back downstairs and move on. At the next junction, the brown metal door will be smashed down by a new breed of critter — the *alien slave*. Kill it dead and grab the ammo clips inside the room. Hang a right, and kill the headcrab in front of the dumpster. Toss a grenade into the hole in the floor to kill the headcrab below. Drop through into the sewers, and hang a right. Use the valve, then float up to any of the grates in the ceiling. In the next room, take the clips from the fallen guard, and toss the switch. Take the service elevator down, while evading the swarms of headcrabs that drop down. Once you get to the bottom, heal up, then cap the houndeye that appears on top of the crate. Smash open the remaining crates for plenty of pistol ammo. Head to the next area, where a critter will drop from the ceiling and bash through a metal catwalk. Just hop up on the metal pipes to your right, and inch your way across. Bash into the ventilation duct, then break the grate and drop down.



UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES: This poor sap doesn't realize that he's about to plummet to his doom. Just stay back, watch him fall, and then grab the ammo clips on the right.



UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES: Keep the scientist alive through this area, and he'll open a door to a room full of grenades for you.



UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES: Just when you thought you were safe, a door bashes down to reveal an alien slave. Blow him away and then get moving!

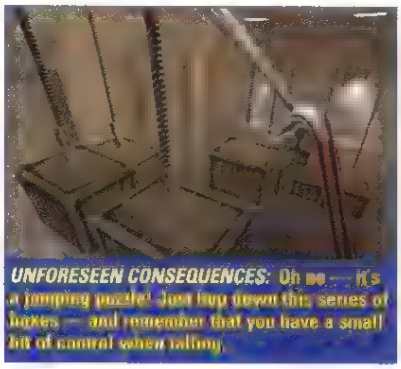
Go through the doorway marked *Lower Canal*, and climb the ladder down. Go through the green door.

Avoid the monster munching on the headcrabs, and drop into the canal, being oh-so-careful to avoid the barnacles on the ceiling. Swim under the arch, and climb the ladder. Head through the metal door to the opposite side of the canal, and kill the beastie. Go through the door into the next area.

It's jumping puzzle time! Climb the ladders, then use the boxes as stepping stones. Remember to look down — and you do have a bit of control when in midair. Keep going forward, climb the ladder, and move on until you reach an elevator. Head upstairs.

Office Complex

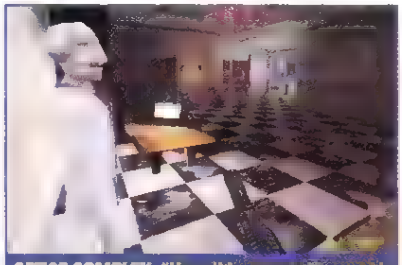
Head to the left and bash open the grate. Once inside the duct, turn on your flashlight and take a left. Keep going past the blocked-off room with the fan. At the second fan room, hop down and grab the ammo from the fallen guard. Head back the way you came, then crawl up the slanted duct. Drop down, watch out for the barnacles, and talk to the scientists. Go through the door marked *High Voltage* and throw the switch. Exit back to the



UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES: Oh no — it's a jumping puzzle! Just hop down this series of boxes — and remember that you have a small bit of control when falling.

OFFICE COMPLEX: Well, so much for collecting hazard pay. In this last room, you can grab some clips from this dead guard.

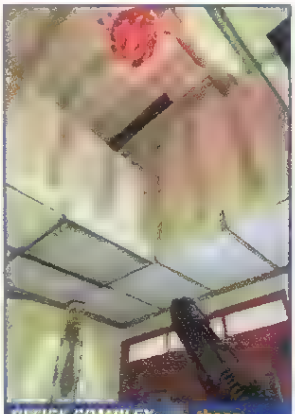
main hallway. Walk past the ruined light fixture and break through the glass. Crouch-jump through. Enter the lab on the right through the window. Use the table as a stepping stone — then hop across to the first aid station, then to the sink under the light switch. Throw the switch, and power to the room will be cut off. Switch on your flashlight. Break open the grate and blast the three headcrabs waiting inside. Head through and crouch to avoid the fan. Smash through the grate at the end of the hall, then walk through and drop down. Go through the double doors.



OFFICE COMPLEX: "Hey, did you read about Gordon Freeman's *Bill Nye?*" This scientist believes in run — so he'll take his chances with the military death squads.

Take a right, and walk to the dark corner of the hallway. Hang a left, and you'll find yourself in a red-lit room full of crates. Bust them all open. Be careful — the big one holds a headcrab! In the next room, take the shotgun and save the guard from the zombie — he'll open the door and you can stock up on ammo. The crates below contain some health and batteries.

Head back to the main hallway, and go through the double doors you just opened. Some headcrabs will drop from the ceiling. Waste them, then push the metal boxes under the ladder above. Climb up, walk forward, then break through the grate below. Do an about-face to kill the headcrab, then bash through the metal grate into the next room. Watch in amusement as the scientist and the pursuing headcrab get ventilated. Quickly jump down and head to the right, sprinting to the control box *under* the gun. Use the crates as cover. Throw the switch to deactivate the gun — now you can explore at your leisure. In the side rooms, you can find shotgun ammo and clips. If you're sneaky, try luring the headcrabs in the next hallway out into the open, then trigger the sentry gun. When you're ready, move on up the stairs.



OFFICE COMPLEX: Ugh, these nasty barnacles — just when you least expect it, they'll drop from the ceiling and start munching on a hapless scientist.

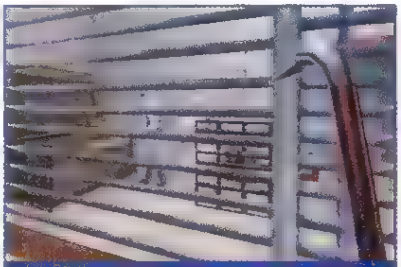
Get the attention of the security guard, then move on into the office complex. Spread out and kill the various alien slaves, and load up on health and ammo in the side rooms. Head past the cola machines. Gab with the scientist in the next room. Be cautious as you head up the stairs — there's a sentry gun waiting for you at the top, and a series of headcrabs waiting at the second flight. In the next hallway, take out the zombie by shooting the explosive crate. Move on and kill the two alien slaves. Head through the door and talk to the guard.

The room below has some ammo and grenades, but keep in mind that it's a trap — there are several critters waiting to warp in and kick your ass, so use caution. If you're in the mood for more secrets, there's a grate right next to the door under the flashing green *exit* sign — there's a side-quest where you have to solve a few jumping puzzle, navigate a few catwalks, and finally pop out in a room stocked with grenades.

Move on until you get to a high ceilinged room with a zombie picking at a scientist. A mess of ceiling tiles will break, and it'll start raining headcrabs! Take 'em out with a few grenades, then beat down the wooden barrier to the next area. Avoid the preoccupied zombies (unless you need the health), and throw the switch to enter the food storage area.

OFFICE COMPLEX: The water from the broken pipes is electrified, so dangerous swimming. Make your way over to the sink, and simply flip the switch off.

Hang a left through two doors,



OFFICE COMPLEX: Hey, dumbass! Look out for that zomb... eh, never mind. If you save this peon, you'll be rewarded with a ton of shotgun shells.

OFFICE COMPLEX: "Hmmm... must... find... wallet." This zombie seems preoccupied with this dead scientist — it's best to leave him alone, move on, and conserve your ammo.

OFFICE COMPLEX: Alien slaves galore await you in the office complex. The best way to deal with these guys is a shotgun blast to the face, and a boot to the head.

and kill the beastie that comes running after the scientist. Grab some ammo from the aquamarine lit room, then do an about-face and head down the hallway. Kill the monster that comes out from behind the crates, and hit the red lever to start the moving red platform. Head back to the entrance room (the scientist should be chilling out here), and climb the ladder. Bash out the grate, and do a duck-jump into the air duct. Follow the duct until you get to an overlook of the main hall, then jump on the red platform to hop across to the adjacent duct. Head on through.

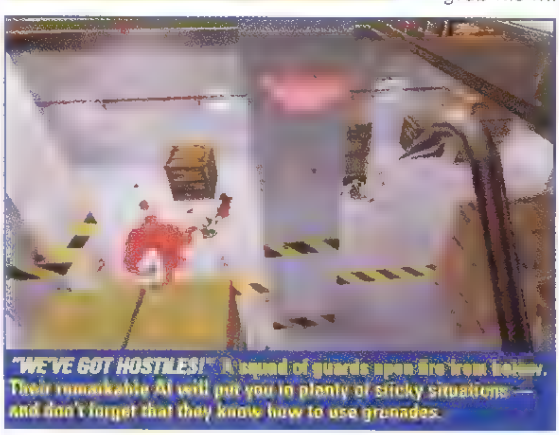
You'll pop out in a room packed with ventilation ducts. Grab any goodies you can find, but be wary of the barnacles above. When you're ready to proceed, climb the ladder and head back into the duct system. You'll emerge in the company of a security guard — get his attention and head up the stairs. Waste the head crabs. Check out the Man in Black through the door to the right, then move on to the green hallway. Blast both monsters that pop out. Raid the office on the left for shotgun shells.

Now, pull a Jackie Chan and leap into the elevator shaft. Make your way along the ledges and up the ladders, then hop onto the ladder attached to the elevator. Beat through the ceiling tile and drop into the elevator.

"We've Got Hostiles!"

Hang a right and watch the resulting mayhem. After the scientist blows himself up with the laser claymore, break the emergency glass to shut off the fire door. It's time for you to meet the sentry guns! It's impossible *not* to trigger them here — just dash around

"WE'VE GOT HOSTILES!" Sentry guns are some of the most deadly adversaries in the game. Still, all it takes is a grenade to decommission them.



"WE'VE GOT HOSTILES!" A squad of guards spun this train below. Their remarkable AI will put you in plenty of sticky situations — and don't forget that they know how to use grenades.

OFFICE COMPLEX: The hanging barnacles in this room can get to be a real pain when jumping about, so take 'em out with your Glock.

the crates and screen doors, and smack the other fire door button.

In the next hall, you'll find a laser claymore. It is *very* important that you do not set these off! Jump and duck under the blue beams, and head into the next area. Kill the electro-beasties, and heal up if needed. Continue onward and down the ramp into the high security storage facility. Hop across the laser beam and whip around in time to blast the beastie who warps in, and the second one who follows him. Make your way up the green crates. Drop down and kill all incoming headcrabs, then seal off the fire door.

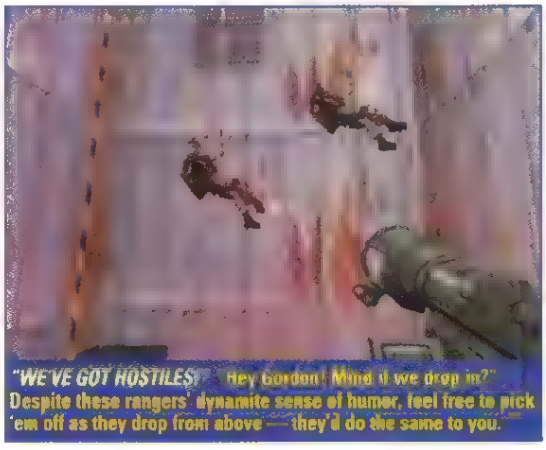
Exercise caution in the next area — the floors are slippery, and there are sentry guns ready to go. Hop over the first beam, duck under the second, and hurdle over the third. Though it's not very polite, wax both scientists — they'll probably wind up inadvertently walking into a beam and killing you off. Grab some ammo from the crates, but *don't* destroy the one attached to the laser claymore. Climb the red ladders, and make your way across the catwalk into the next area.

Now, you'll meet the rescue team, who seems more intent on killing everyone. Blast the grunt and grab his MP5. Hop on the elevator and go up. Take out the guards on the lower level, and break the crates for batteries. Head upstairs, head through the fire door, and trigger it. Walk across the catwalk — but be on the lookout for the barnacles dropping in. Ignore the claymores on the left and head to the right. Hop on the conveyor belt and keep running to the next room. Climb up the green crates with the crouch-

"WE'VE GOT HOSTILES!" The Osprey is an evil, evil thing. Get back underground as soon as possible.

jump, then hop on the second conveyor belt.

In the next room, lay the smack down on the grunt lurking behind the bunker. Grab his ammo and heal up. Drop off the catwalk, being careful *not* to trigger the red lasers! Blast the fire door button and sneak under, hurdling over the claymore mine. Head up the stairs, taking out the barnacle above (try luring one of the troopers into its gaping maw for extra style points). Keep moving upward, pick ng up the ammo that's been graciously ieft for you



"WE'VE GOT HOSTILES!" Hey Gordon! Mind if we drop in?" Despite these rangers' dynamite sense of humor, feel free to pick 'em off as they drop from above — they'd do the same to you.

Boogie on down to the elevator labeled *Surface Access*, and enter. Once you make it outside, blast any troopers in your way and head back down into the concrete bunker, ignoring the Osprey that keeps dropping troops. Head to the door marked *Vent Access*, and head down the ladders, taking out the troopers who drop down to attack. Head into the cooling duct and go forward. Drop down on to the first ledge. If you head through the next series of vents, you can pick up some extra ammo in some familiar-looking areas. When you're significantly stocked, use the red ladder to descend past the fan, and head into the other duct. Keep going forward until you get into another narrow room. Use the ladders to get up to the center duct, and head through.

Hey, *this* looks familiar! The scientist will give you instructions to find the Lambda Team at the opposite end of the base. Hit the silo access doors and head through the door that opens.

Blast Pit

Use that trusty crowbar to whack through the layers of wooden blockage. Kill the headcrabs waiting to ambush you. Head up to the control room and hit the red lever — but keep an eye on the door to the right. Snatch the ammo and other various goodies inside, then use the ladder to head down to the elevator. Hit the button and drop down to the next level.

Hop on to the train and fire that sucker up. Once you get ejected, get out of the radioactive ooze by crouch jumping onto one of the crates. Climb the ladder, then drop into the pipe. Once the next level loads, hop out of

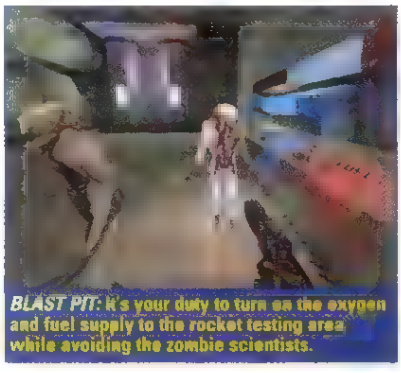
BLAST PIT: This scientist is about to be "probed" by a rather large tentacle. Look out!

the pipe, then walk along the top until you can drop down to the platform below. Grab the health, then move into the silo room. Climb the pipes to the elevator, and trigger it.

In the next room, kill all the houndeyes who come bounding at you, then do a running jump across the missing portion of the walkway. Hit the red lever to enter the jet engine testing lab. Talk to the dying scientist, then head into the control room. Watch as your pal gets gored. Continue onward until the tentacles are in view.

Now, remember that these fellows are blind, but they've got a pretty good sense of hearing. The key is to use grenades to distract them, and keep crouched down to keep your suit in stealth mode. Head down to the first blocked-off doorway, and bash through with your crowbar. Head to the airlock and flip the switch.

Head across the catwalk, and follow the red and blue pipes until you reach an intersection. Head down the ladder to the right, and kill the zombies. Break open the circular pipe and go down the ladder. You're now in the sewers. Head across the pipe to the T intersection, then take a left. Climb up the ladder and kill the zombie waiting up top. Grab the grenades in the side room. Continue on to the airlock, then hit the panel on the right to enter the wind tunnel.



BLAST PIT: It's your duty to turn on the oxygen and fuel supply to the rocket testing area while avoiding the zombie scientists.

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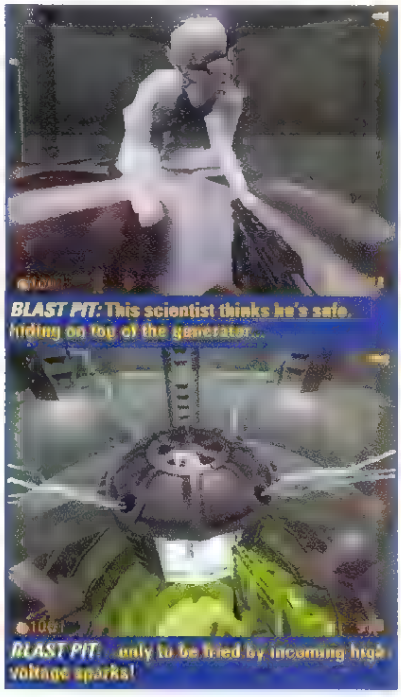
Climb down the ladders to the base of the fan, hit the switch, and head back up the ladders ASAP. After the fan starts going, hop into the center of the room and get a lift. Use the crowbar to beat through the wooden planks, then bash your way into yet another ventilation duct. Be on the lookout for crafty headcrabs Head out of the ducts and down the ladder. In the next room, trigger the oxygen and the fuel buttons. Your mission is accomplished here — head up the ladder and make your way back to the naughty tentacle room

Head down to the bottom layer of the silo, using grenades to distract the tentacles. You'll be required to make two hefty jumps, so remember the *quicksave* button (F6) in case you miss! Enter the airlock and head into the power facility. Walk across the bridge, then waste the houndeyes in your way. In the next room with the swinging chains, trigger the elevator and go inside. When it gets stuck, jump across to the ladder, and slowly make your way down.

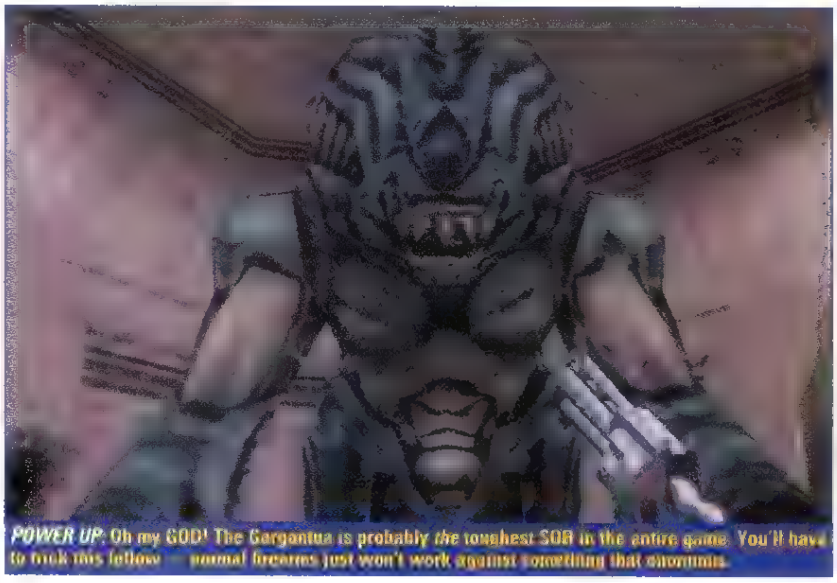
Once you reach the bottom, talk to the scientist. Head on to the actual silo, and trigger the moving platform. Climb the ladders to the top of the generator, and hit the buttons on each side. Head back down before you get fried, and return to the ladder. Climb up top.

It seems that the water in the next hallway is now electrified, so



BLAST PIT: This scientist thinks he's safe, hiding on top of the generator...

BLAST PIT: ...only to be fried by incoming high voltage sparks!



POWER UP: Oh my GOD! The Gargantua is probably *the* toughest SOB in the entire game. You'll have to trick this fellow — normal firearms just won't work against something that enormous.

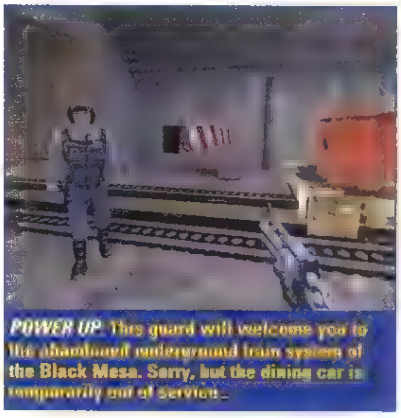
push and pull the metal crates, using them as stepping stones to get across the water. Head back to the jet engine silo's control room, and tap the *Test Fire* button. Watch in glee as the tentacles are toasted. Now, head down to the hole that the rocket engine left You'll drop into a pool of water.

Head through either of the two holes under the wiggling chunk of tentacle, take a right, and surface. Walk down the ladder and charge up. Head back up and jump on to the pipe. Keep dropping down to the pipes below, until you reach a large pipe with a valve on top Jump off into the adjacent pipe. Walk forward, then go for a ride into the lower office. Break open the crates for some laser claymores.

Power Up

Avoid the really freaking large blue thing that seems intent on killing everything. Dash across to the red-lit hallway and take a left. Head up the stairs. After the ground goes out, climb the ladder, break the wooden boards, and enter the track control room. Take the guard's .357. Charge up your suit. Head back down the ladder, killing the headcrabs and other minions waiting for you. Turn the valve at the end of the hallway and enter the hazardous waste room. Go up the ladders, wax the grunt waiting up top, and follow the signs marked *Power Generator.*

Take on the squad in the large room (the explosive crates stacked behind the bunker should prove useful). Head up the ramps, and hit the



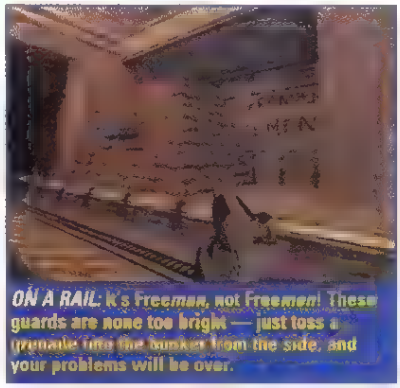
POWER UP: This guard will welcome you to the abandoned underground train system of the Black Mesa. Sorry, but the dining car is temporarily out of service...

button that triggers the elevator. Toss a grenade down the shaft to set off the laser claymores, then head down and take out the remaining houndeyes. Find the spiral staircase, and go all the way down to the maintenance area. Use the crowbar to knock out the crates blocking the machinery.

Head up to the next level, and trigger the left power generator at the end of the hallway. Head back upstairs, but be wary of a squad of rangers waiting to ambush you. Go back to the room with the enormous blue beastie, take a left, and sprint past the conduits, up the stairs, and throw the red switch. Watch in amusement as our big buddy gets fried by several million volts of electricity. Take the side hallway back to the main room. Get on the train, and drive it up to the revolving track. Head up to the track control room, and throw the switch to rotate the track. Get on the train, trigger it, and you're on to the next episode!

On A Rail

Talk to the security guy, and pull the switch to raise the barrier. Get back on the train and ride until you get to the first red arrow-switcher. Stop the train, hop off, and kill the houndeyes waiting for you. The green-lit control room is our destination, since we've got to move the hook that's blocking the train. Follow the tracks forward under the blue walkway, and at the four-way junction, hang a right. Drop into the water, then climb up the ladder into the room with the monster. Kill it, grab the grenades under the stairs, then head up. Toss a grenade behind the boxes to neutralize the sentry gun, then hit the switch to move the hook. Now head back to your train, shoot the red switcher so the left-arrow is visible, then start up the train. Grab your MP5.



ON A RAIL: It's Freeman, not Freemen! These guards are none too bright — just toss a grenade into the bunker from the side, and your problems will be over.

Waste the troopers waiting for you as your train ascends. Keep driving forward until you hit the first barricade. Take out the two guards on the left, and the gun behind the bunker to the right. Head to the right and up the stairs, eliminating any resistance you encounter. Watch the resulting mayhem as the troopers take on the alien slaves. Keep moving forward and down another set of stairs. Take a left at the bottom, then shoot the laser claymores.

Your path is now clear, so head upstairs and back to the train. Throw the switch to raise the barrier, and start up the train. Kill the guards waiting in the next area at the dead-end. Hang a right through the door, and take out the rest of the alien slaves and guards. Break the wooden barrier and say hello to the guard. Raid the soda machine room if you like, but remember to watch out for falling headcrabs.

In the next room, you'll encounter a stationary gun. Use the boxes as cover. Simply get to the right side of the bunker, and toss in a grenade. Now, blow up the claymores in the dark tunnel to the left, then open the red blast doors. Head into the silo and down the ladders. Open the red blast doors, and raid the surrounding rooms for ammo. Hop onto the train, and immediately duck to avoid the sentry-gun triggers in your way. Once the next level loads, duck to avoid the oncoming missiles. However, you'll have to pick off the claymores before the train hits 'em. Head down the hallway to the right. Jump over the green crates and go up the stairs. Throw the red lever. Go back downstairs. After you hop over the green crates, take a left and hop on the train located on the far track. At the next barricade, enter the room to the right, and use the mounted cannon to take out the enemy gunner. Make your way up to the bunker and pull the switch. Get on the train again, and enjoy a leisurely ride up a long shaft. Move the train forward, but try to time it so you don't get fried by the electrical sparks. Stop the train before you hit the next curve, hop off, and destroy the claymores from long range. Get back on the train and move on.

Duck to avoid the boxes moving overhead, and take out the grunt-squad to the right. Throw the switch and continue onward. Duck past the next round of boxes, and keep crouched down to avoid the missile launcher. Once again, try to avoid getting fried by electrical sparks in the next hallway, and keep the train going forward.

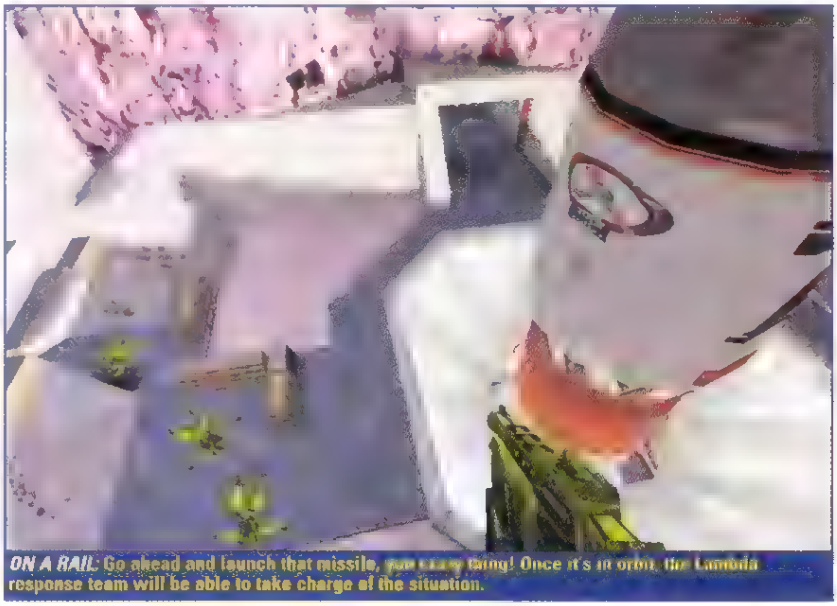
End of the line! Take a right and climb halfway down the ladder. Throw a grenade down the shaft to set off the claymores, then hop over the red sentry gun laser. Heal up at the first aid kit, then follow the tunnel. Using the boxes as cover, make your way up to the bunker and toss in a grenade. Take a right up the stairs, and listen to the grunts' conversation. Take them out, then walk to the blast doors. Hit the panel on the left. In the next area, take out the grunts, and enter the blast doors.

Whoo-ee, that's a *lot* of C4! There's no way you're setting those off and living to tell the tale. See those metal boxes? Pull the first one out of the way, then push the taller box *under* the second and third laser beams. Now, head up the stairs, ducking under the first two lasers. Hop on to the metal box to the right, then jump over the third beam — it's easier said than done, so remember to save before you attempt it. Head to the control room and hit the launch button. Good job! Now go back downstairs (once again, using the metal box as a stepping stone), then go back through the blast doors.

Be on the lookout for a sniper to the right, hiding up in the rocks. Use cover as much as possible, and dart through the arch on the left. Go down the ladder, grab the explosive satchels and claymores on the crates, and hop on the train. And off you go to the next exciting chunk of *Half-Life!*

...TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH!

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 154



ON A RAIL: Go ahead and launch that missile, you crazy thing! Once it's in orbit, the Lambda response team will be able to take charge of the situation.

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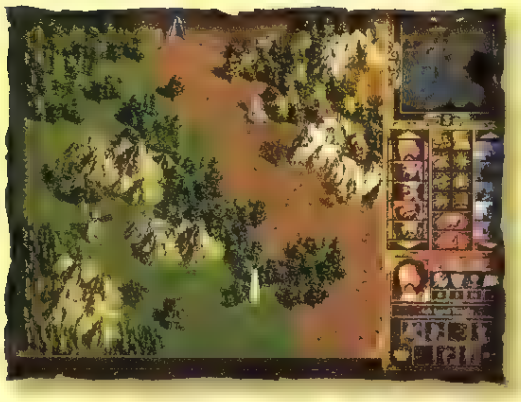
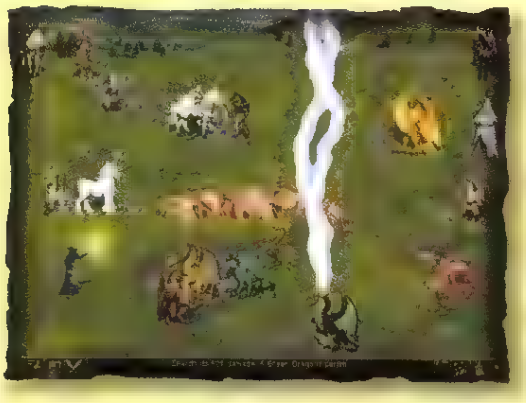
AN EMPIRE
FROM
THE COMFORT
OF YOUR
OWN HOME



EPIC BATTLES OF STRATEGY AND HONOR



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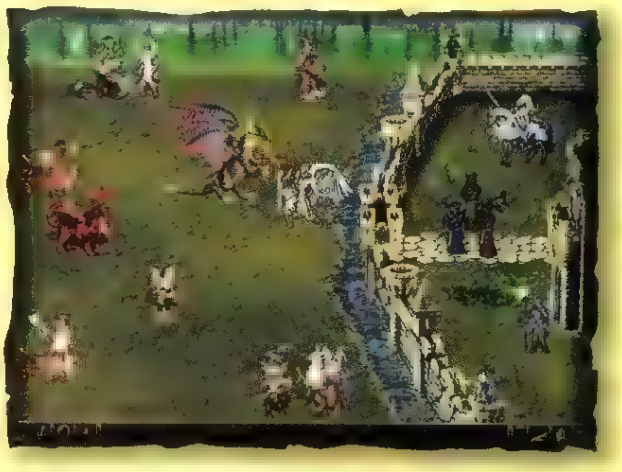

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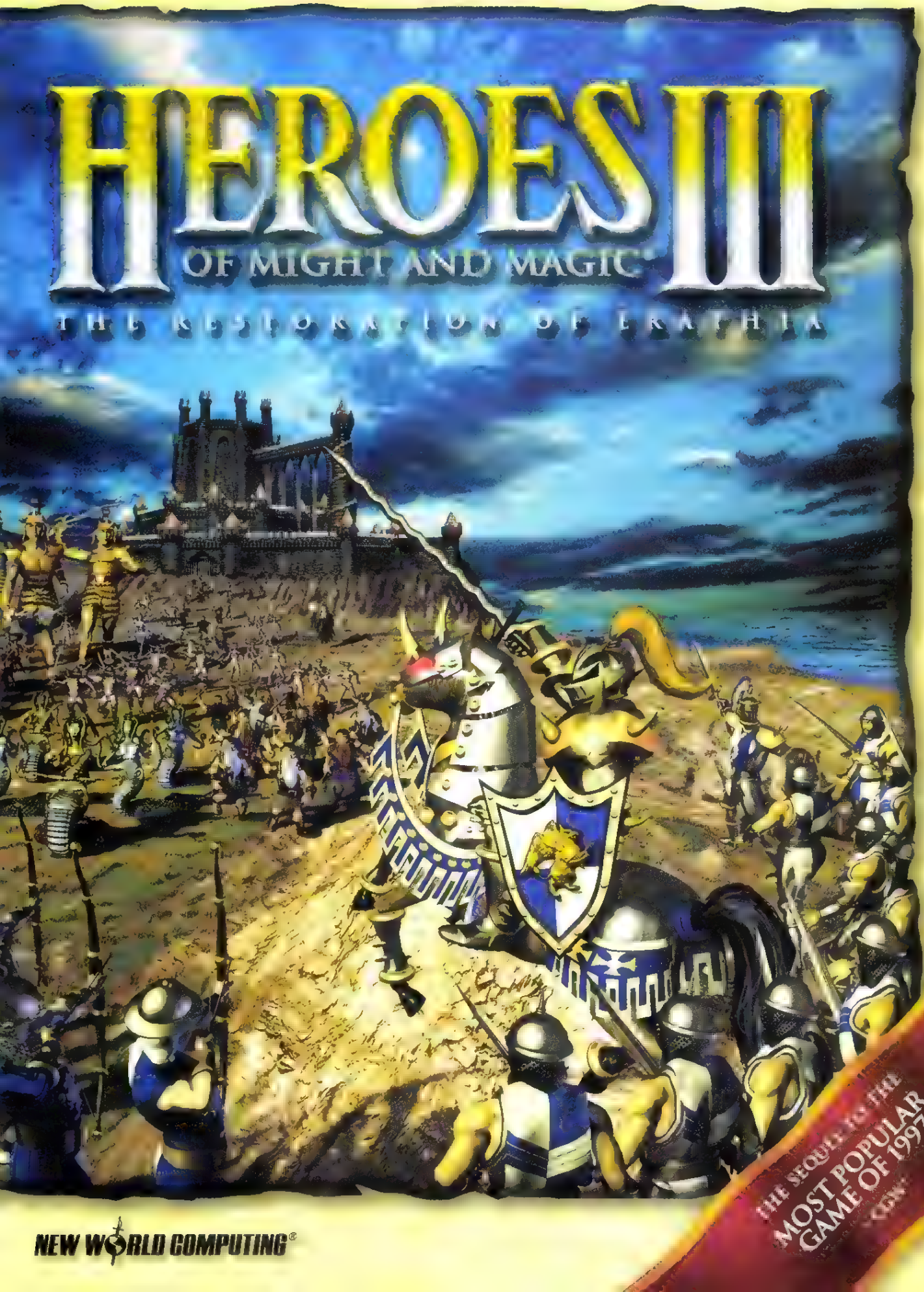
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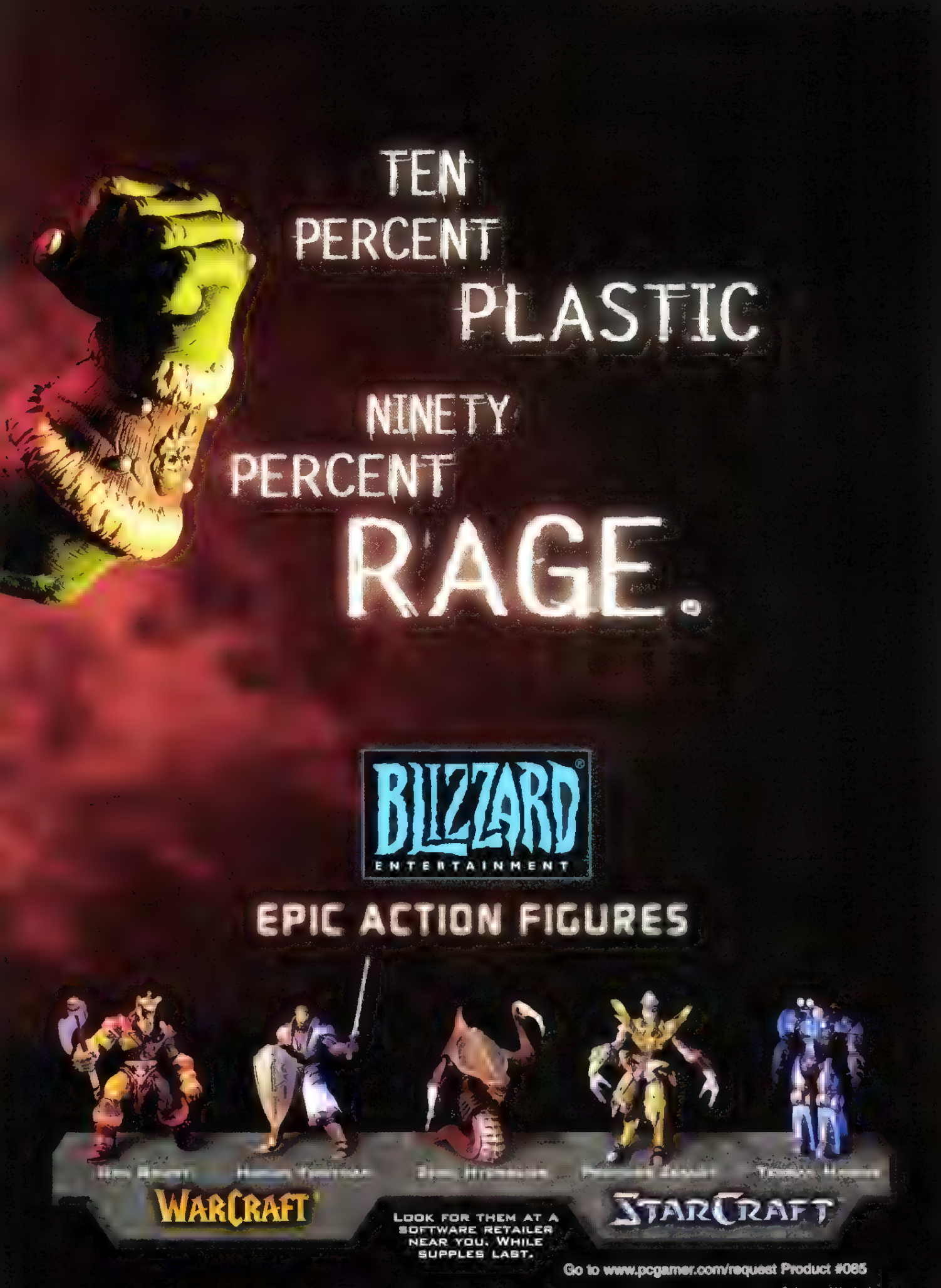
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Blood 2

Looking to dish out some pain to those undead Cabal evil-doers? Then you'll find our guide, direct from the game's designers at Monolith, invaluable reading.

General Hints

AIM CAREFULLY. *Blood II* offers localized hit damage. This means that the more eagle eyed shooters can do extra damage by shooting an enemy in the head. In addition, enemies will realistically recoil when hit. Aim low and watch them grab their knee in agonizing pain!

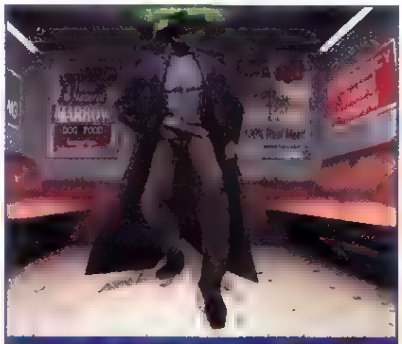
USE BOMBS. Don't underesti mate the three different types of bombs you can accumulate in *Blood II*. There's nothing quite like the satisfaction you get from luring a pack of Cultists into a carefully laid trap with a remote or time bomb. You shouldn't have any of these toys left when you finish the game.

TRASH THE PLACE! Cabalco isn't exactly the most environmentally conscious megacorporation out there, so you shouldn't feel too bad about littering their establishments and busting up everything in sight. Crates and barrels often hide health, ammo, and power-ups, so take the time to crack them open and see what goodies you can find. If you're low on ammo, make sure you use your knife.

DON'T GET OVERWHELMED! Some enemies, like the Soul Drudge and Shikari, like to attack in packs and surround you. In the heat of battle, it's easy to get caught in a corner when you run backwards while firing at the enemy. Don't let this happen to you. If you need to, try luring the enemy away one at a time to make things more manageable.

DON'T BREAK UP FIGHTS! Remember as a kid how it was always a bad idea to break up two dogs in a fight. No? Well, trust us, it was. You'd most likely be the one to get bitten. Likewise, if two or more enemies in *Blood II* start going after each other, back off and let them duke it out. Then you can reward the victor with a shiny new bullet between the eyes. Saves health, saves ammo. An even better tactic is to trick them into fighting each other by putting one between you and the other. If the foe in back shoots at you, it might hit the other, who will try to return the favor.

LISTEN UP! And down. And around. Sounds are sometimes as important as sights. If you hear a pack of Fanatics in a corner, bounce a grenade their way. Likewise, if you're strolling along and suddenly hear gunfire, *move*! It likely means somebody is looking at you down the sight of their rifle and you need to take quick cover. Also, most enemies sound a unique alarm when they first spot you. Hearing it gives you an extra second or two to take cover or locate the threat.



This is the man of the hour himself, Caleb. Right now he has just a little gun, but soon he'll be armed with some outstanding weapons.

A good number of the weapons in the game feature dual fire modes. This is a great feature to have, but you'll need to watch your ammo because it will vanish twice as fast. There's always a catch....

Fighting Agents and Creatures

The Cabal represents a vast rogues' gallery of foes, all of which would prefer to see you bullet-ridden and six feet under. The Cabal has transformed from a horde of robed mystics into a megacorporation full of militaristic soldiers. Still, they all bleed easily enough.

Most Cabal Agents will take area-specific damage. That is, they'll take 50 percent less damage from shots to their appendages, but die instantly from head shots. Prophets are the exception.

CABAL CULTIST

These are the "rent-a-cops" of the Cabal army. While they don't look like your typical cultist dressed in their snazzy business suits, don't let that fool you. They've sworn to serve the Cabal, so feel free to fill them with your ammunition of choice. Don't waste the heavy artillery on these guys, though, since they're typically only armed with Beretta pistols (though they can sometimes carry better weapons) and can't take much punishment. Moreover, they're not that bright, panic easily, and have only average tracking ability.

CABAL FANATIC

Fanaticism has its rewards in the ranks of the Cabal. Not only do you

get to wear cool urban camouflage and a gas mask, but you get your very own Assault Rifle and 10 percent off day-old sandwiches at the Cabalco cafeteria. Until you can acquire some heavy firepower of your own, these guys can be a real nuisance. To make matters worse, Fanatics can occasionally activate a special canister that injects chemical stimulants directly into their brain. This drives them into berzerker mode, spiking their health to 60 and their armor to 50. Take them out fast and try to separate them if you find them in groups. To make matters worse, Fanatics have been known to trade in their Assault Rifles for even more dangerous weapons. Note: Fleeing Fanatics will drop proximity mines to discourage the player from following them.

ZEALOT

Like the Fanatics, the Zealots represent some of the Cabal's most elite shock troops. However, while Fanatics rely on military weapons, Zealots rely on dark magic to try to separate your head from your shoulders. They have three means of attack: First, they can shoot deadly blue balls of mystic energy that travel quickly. Second, they can attack with magical fire, also at a good distance. Third, if you get too close for their comfort, they can erect a magical shield that pushes you back to a safer distance. Zealots often travel in groups with other Zealots and Fanatics. Take them down as fast as you can with a medium-range weapon. Zealots self-destruct shortly after death. They also can heal themselves if left alone, and they may be able to heal others.

PROPHETS

They don't get much nastier than this. Prophets are kept in reserve by the Cabal for the times when real power is needed. Heavily armored and armed to the teeth, these guys can put you in a world of hurt, especially when in groups. Prophets are not affected by body-specific damage (like head shots), and they can use any weapon. Get out some of your heavier artillery to punch through their armor and take them out.

MAD SCIENTIST

Remember that nerdy little guy you used to stuff into trash cans in high school? Well, he grew up, joined the Cabal, underwent extreme genetic mutation, and now spends his time trying to spring traps on you from his safe little control room. The Mad Scientist never attacks you directly, but rather activates traps and other environmental effects to try to do you in. If you can make your way to his control room, he'll just try to run away and beg for his life.

BONE LEECH

Ewwww...that pretty much sums up the Bone Leech. These little parasitic worms are vulnerable outside of their hosts, which is part of the reason they'd like to scurry up your chest and attach to your throat. And this symbiotic relationship isn't like that bird that sits on top of the hippopotamus in those nature television shows. Bone Leeches are nasty! They don't have many health points, though, so squash them before they can annoy you too much.

SOUL DRUDGE

A tracheotomy gone bad, the Soul Drudge is the first step in the parasitic Bone Leech's evolution after attaching itself onto a victim. The Bone Leech controls the former human by grafting onto its throat and spinal cord, and will attack anything that looks threatening (hint: *you* look

threatening). The good news is these guys don't have the coordination to handle firearms, so all they can do is try to close in on you and hack you with their crowbars, knives, axes, or whatever else is handy. Keep your distance, pick them off, and don't let yourself get hooked with the chain or backed into a corner. Soul Drudges can only be defeated by doing damage to the head or chest, so target those areas. As with the Cabal Agents, soul drudges are affected by body-specific damage.

Here's a great strategy for easily taking out enemies with a melee attack, especially Soul Drudges or the Drudge Lords: run like a maniac and get right in their faces. This will cause them to switch from ranged attack mode to melee. When they rear back to take a swipe at you, backpedal and fill them full of lead while they finish their swing. Repeat until they're dead. Just be careful trying to use this tactic in a crowd you can get surrounded easily.

DRUDGE LORD

Given time to grow, a Soul Drudge will evolve into the more powerful and more dangerous Drudge Lord. These unpleasant fellows will try to skewer you with giant bone hooks protruding from their forearms, and they won't stop until one of you is dead — again. Metal plates over their chest and neck make Drudge Lords harder to kill, and when damaged they occasionally drop a Bone Leech parasite. These monstrosities are capable of a magical ranged attack in the form of a fireball, but it's fairly easy to dodge. When battling Drudge Lords, be on the lookout for other threats; they like to keep Soul Drudges around as lackeys. Drudge Lords take 50 percent more damage from head shots, and only 25 percent normal damage from appendage shots.

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Beating The Bosses

BEHEMOTH

This giant, ugly predator serves as the boss at the end of the second episode, and even makes more appearances later on in the game.

Fresh off the bus from the Elder God dimension, the Behemoth spells trouble if you're not ready for him. It will attack whatever it comes across, but has little ability to track you over distances or around many corners, so it is possible to run away from him. This creature is very difficult to kill, due in no small part to its tough armor. Then you've got to kill it again.

Going toe-to-toe with a Behemoth isn't really advisable; a much better strategy is to find a place up high if possible, where you can snipe at it until it goes down. Just be careful, because it is capable of ranged attacks. You'll be facing two of these creatures as you go along.

NAGA

Big, ugly, and lots of trouble for those without heavy artillery, the Naga serves as the boss of the first episode. Keep moving, and try to find some cover you can duck in and out of. The Naga is big, which makes it a bit intimidating, but it also means it can't follow you a lot of places. Find those places and use them strategically.

GIDEON

The current leader of the Cabal and C.E.O. of Cabalco, Gideon is the reason behind many of your troubles, but you'll have to wait until the end of the third episode to thank him for it. He's fast, tough, wily, and loaded up with enough magic to tear you apart with ease if you're not careful. If you've got any heavy weaponry or power-ups lying around, now would be a good time to use them.

UNDEAD GIDEON

The head cheese at Cabalco makes an encore appearance at the end of Chapter Four. He looks, acts, and smells exactly like the Gideon you fought at the end of Chapter Three, but once you crack his outer shell his undead form reveals itself and his attacks are renewed.

THE ANCIENT ONE

He's the final Boss. We don't want to give away too much information because your fight with this guy is one of the high points of *Blood II*, and you may not want to spoil the surprise. It's really nothing like what you may be

DRUDGE PRIEST

The top rung in the evolutionary ladder of the Bone Leech, the Drudge Priests possess magical powers that make them quite dangerous. They float above the ground, the former human body host hanging like a gestation sack for more Bone Leeches. Put them down however you like, but be careful — they often drop more Bone Leeches when they die.

SHIKARI

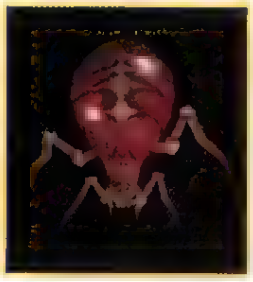
These spindly creatures are full of predatory rage and ferocity. Shikari are always out looking for a good meal, and you look as tasty as any thing else. Once they set their sights on you, they'll relentlessly pursue you, swimming, climbing, jumping, and even scaling walls or ceilings so they can rip you apart with their claws. They can dodge, shimmy, and jive their way out of danger, and can leap forward to close gaps between themselves and their prey. And as if that weren't enough, they can spit streams of powerful acid at you from across great distances. Once a Shikari takes its prey down, it will ignore everything else while it gorges itself. Shikari take body-specific damage like the Drudge Lord.

CHOKING HANDS

Waste not, want not. Fresh, whole corpses aren't always available to be made into Soul Drudges or zombies to serve the whims of the Cabal. As a result, the mad scientists have to make due with what they have. Often that's just a spare hand or

two. What these things lack in menacing appearance they make up for in determination and zeal. Don't let them get too close, or they'll grab onto your face and start squeezing it harder than an old lady testing melons at the supermarket. If they do manage to get the drop on you and start giving you the old cranial massage, you'll have to shake them off by pressing the "use" key repeatedly.

THIEF

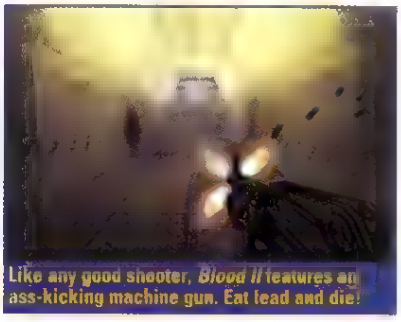


This creature has elevated taking advantage of others to a whole new level. The Thief is a small, stealthy, spider-like creature that attacks from behind, attaching to the base of the skull and injecting a poison that slowly destroys the victim's nervous system until death occurs. If the poison does not immediately cause death, it will cause extreme disorientation. Kill it quickly.

Multi-player Tactics

KNOW THE LEVEL. This is probably the thing that will increase your score the most (besides using the mouse to aim). Know the location of every item, health, ammo, secret location, and power-up on each level. This comes mainly from experience, but you can get a head start by loading up a Bloodbath level on your own and playing just by yourself.

RUN PATTERNS. Once you know a level by heart, develop a pattern that will take you to all the ammo, items, and power-ups. This will enable you to quickly equip yourself and dominate. You should also know the quickest way to get to any ammo or power-up from every respawn location. Again, this comes mainly from experience, but you can quicken things up by paying attention and playing the levels on your own to practice.



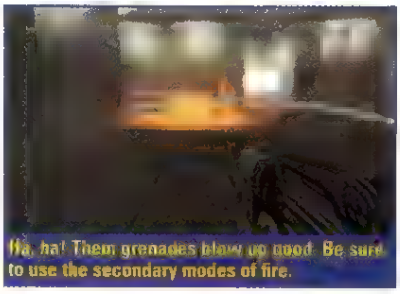
Like any good shooter, *Blood II* features an ass-kicking machine gun. Eat lead and die!

Bloodbath, Blood II's version of Deathmatch, features all new powers, like the invisibility. There's nothing more fun than running circles around your enemies.

DON'T STAND STILL. Never stop moving. Ever. This is important for single player games, and it goes triple for Bloodbath. A stationary target is an easy target, and an easy target is a dead target. Even if you're waiting for an elevator to come down, run around in circles until it arrives just in case somebody is watching with a Sniper Rifle. Also, make sure you have the "always run" option selected so you move about more quickly.

BE WASTEFUL. First off, grab every piece of ammo you can, even if you don't need it. Even if you don't have a Flare Gun, you can grab those flares to keep your opponents from using them against you. Second, if you're at full health or armor and see a Megahealth or Necroward, do a little damage to yourself (by, for example, pointing the Howitzer or Tesla Cannon at your feet and firing) so you can grab it. You'll be at full capacity again afterwards, and it will keep your opponents from acquiring the added protection.

BE A SCAVENGER. There is no honor in this game. Scavenge for kills whenever you can. If you see two guys duking it out, take them both out from a distance with a napalm rocket or the Tesla Cannon's alternate fire while they're preoccupied with each other. Also, large area attacks like the alt fires of the Life Leech or the Voodoo doll are great for picking off several weak



Ha, ha! Them grenades blow up good. Be sure to use the secondary modes of fire.

ened combatants at a time.

LAY TRAPS. Most people make a beeline for ammo or power-ups when they see them. Take advantage of this by either placing a bomb in their path, or aiming ahead with an area effect weapon like the Howitzer. A proximity bomb on the other side of a door is another effective trap. They may never see what hit them.

COVER YOUR TRACKS. There are some times when you just want to run away, screaming like a little girl. This most often happens when you're low on ammo or there's some guy coming after you with The Anger and a Minigun. When running from an opponent, there are a few things you can do to shake them, maybe permanently. Dropping a Bug Spray grenade with the Assault rifle's alternate fire will make people think twice about following you. Also, the more fleet-footed can run backwards and use the alternate fire from the Insect a Cutioner to lay down a barrier of flame for their pursuers.

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 153

Sequel to the 1998 Best Seller ARMY MEN

FROM THE DESK OF
SARGE
Dear Mrs. Johnson,
It is with my deepest sympathy that I write this letter to inform you that your son, Joe, was mostly melted yesterday in a skirmish with a unit of Tan soldiers.
What is left of Joe I've enclosed in this little baggie. I thought you might like to keep it. If anything else turns up, we will forward it immediately.
You should be proud to know that Joe fought bravely till the very end. As a keepsake, I've attached a photo of Joe in action.
Most people think it's some kind of game out here. For us, every day is a battle for survival. Joe understands that now.
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VINTNOR
Look at this! I've got grapes rotting on the vine! With the shipbuilders on strike, I can't ship my wine to the rest of the Empire. My watchman is full, and boy do I have a hangover.
GLADIATOR
I've got to get to the Temple of Mars to make a sacrifice before tonight's contest in the Coliseum. I think I'm losing my touch. Last night the lions nearly took my head off! If only I hadn't missed that last lesson at the Gladiator School.
CITY BUILDING SERIES
IMPRESSIONS

PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN!

CENTURION
March, march, march... Got to keep on the lookout for the Barbarians. Oh yeah, and rumor has it the Carthaginians may be on the move again. Wait! Is that a camel over there?
PRIEST
I don't know what the world is coming to these days. Young people run wild in the streets, forgetting all about the gods. I don't know where I'm going to find enough Vestal Virgins this year...
CAESAR III

"I find myself continually drawn back to the game to try just one more tactic... To paraphrase Shakespeare's Antony, 'I come to praise Caesar III'."

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

"A must buy for any hard core strategy fan . . ."
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9 OUT OF 10!
"You will find Caesar III a refreshing change from the usual shoot-em-up fare of this season. In short, 'Hail Caesar!'."
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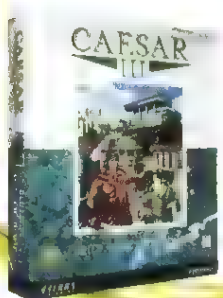

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Easy to play. Hard to resist.

ENLIST A MAGICAL FAMILIAR TO FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE AND DO YOUR BIDDING.

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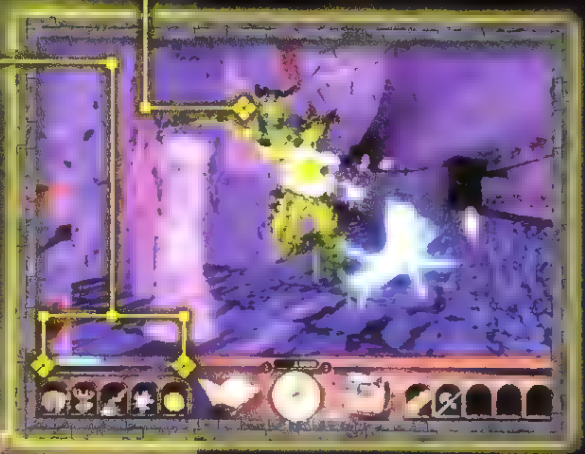

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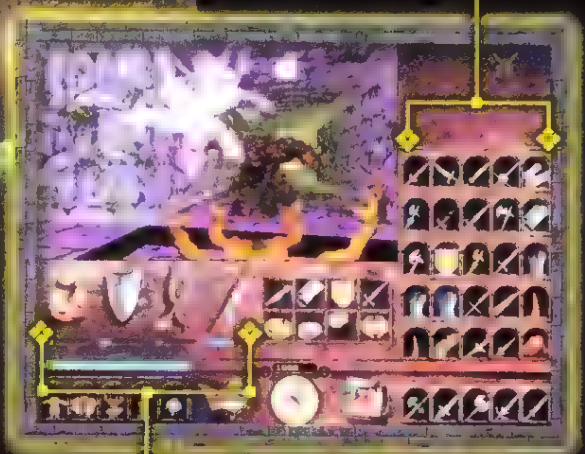

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Delta Force

Bringing hot justice to the world's trouble spots is no easy task, even for a highly trained* Delta Force *team — but this handy field manual will give you what you need to make it through the first three campaigns. Good luck, soldier.

Campaign: Peru

Insurrection

SAW OR M4/DOUBLE AMMO LOAD
SPEC OPS .45

As your first taste of combat, this mission doesn't exactly require subtle tactics — from your starting location, simply follow your waypoints and head into the enemy camp taking out all patrols, guards, and entrenchments. There are plenty of hazards — towers, long range snipers and patrols — but as long as you keep your head on a swivel to check for enemies and use frag grenades to clear suspect buildings, you'll do fine.

Flood

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED

Though the objective for this mission is fairly simple (secure the airstrip) the varied terrain and numerous patrols make it a serious challenge for the unprepared, as enemy soldiers can approach from all sides. Use this opportunity to test out different tactics and weapons, and try using the suppressed pistol to avoid drawing attention to your position.

Weatherman

M4 OR SUPPRESSED
MP5/SATCHEL/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

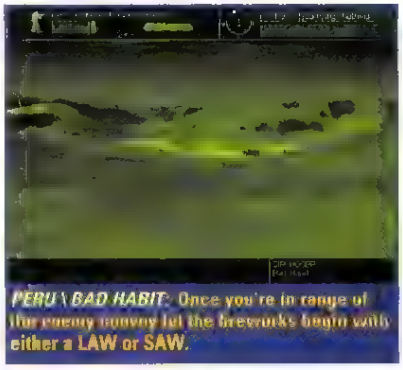
In this mission, you're sent to destroy a cache of weapons in a small rebel camp, and though the default MP5 is good for a quiet entry, the extra fire power and long range of the M4 make it a better choice for the heavy resistance at your objective waypoint. Nearly every building in the small village holds at least one or two guards, and the crossfire from the numerous buildings is deadly. Use frag grenades or the M4's grenade launcher to clear all of the buildings *before* you begin your search for the cache of weapons. Once you've found the stash, use the satchel charge on the weapons and signal base that the job is done.

Bad Habit

SAW/DOUBLE AMMO/STANDARD .45

Your first convoy assault isn't terribly challenging since patrols along the ambush route are fairly light, but the tactics and weapons loadout you choose can make things more interesting. For stealthy players, an MP5 and a suppressed pistol can give you a quiet approach to a hill near the ambush point, affording you the chance to test out the LAW rocket on some moving targets. For a more direct approach, the SAW and a double ammo load are all you'll need to mow down the nearby patrols and the convoy. Either way, expect heavy resistance once the convoy is attacked.

PERU \ HEADHUNTER: As you make your approach to the drug lord's estate in Peru, be careful to avoid the crossfire of friendly units coming in from the left.



PERU \ BAD HABIT: Once you're in range of the enemy convoy let the fireworks begin with either a LAW or SAW.

Masquerade

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

This mission puts your stealth tactics to the test as you're sent behind enemy lines to recover a code book from the enemy camp — but stealth is only part of the equation. A silenced weapon is the best choice for eliminating the patrols around the insertion zone, but hawk-eyed patrols will likely spot you before you can get inside. Here the default MP5 proves to be a bit of a liability. Instead, use the suppressed pistol to squeak by the patrols and outfit the M4 for the actual base assault. Though you'll blow your cover, you'll be better equipped to complete the mission.

Headhunter

SAW OR M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SPECIAL .45

In this all-out assault on a Peruvian drug lord's compound, you'll encounter some of the heaviest resistance yet, and to make things more difficult, HQ wants to capture the drug lord alive. Though the heavier firepower of the SAW or the range of a sniper rifle would make for effective choices during the assault, the flexibility and range of the M4 make it the best choice for this mission. As you close on the objective, watch for escaping vehicles, nearby patrols, and sentries on the hacienda rooftop. Just be careful to avoid shooting the drug lord when targeting hostiles on the second floor balcony.

Campaign: Chad

Exodus

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

Though the mission briefing prepares you for a hostage rescue and equips you for stealth, the bad news is that the hostage has already been moved, and those revolutionaries aren't exactly planning a tea party for the rescue team. You'll encounter hordes of terrorists tucked away inside buildings and tents, and the default MP5 just

isn't going to cut it against the rebels' superior numbers. Ditch the MP5 for the M4 and use the grenade launcher to clear the buildings and tents, then make your way to the objective way point to signal the boys at Intel that the hostage has been moved.

Carrion

SAW/DOUBLE AMMO LOAD OR LAW/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

In an attempt to bring about a swift end to the current crisis, Intelligence has targeted a convoy leading the ene my's top brass away from its head-quarters, and they want you to capture the leader. Though you'll need to bring along some heavy weapons to deal with this convoy assault, your inser-tion just outside of the enemy base also requires stealth. Use the sup-pressed pistol on the patrols to work your way to the objective waypoint but avoid following the pre-set route, as it may reveal your position to the enemy too early. If you're lucky, you may be able to wipe out most of the convoy's defenses as you cross its path shortly before it reaches the waypoint. Once the convoy reaches the waypoint, the second Delta Force team should be able to help you crush the remaining forces and aid you in capturing the leader. Just be careful not to shoot the 4x4 in the ensuing firefight.

Snake Eyes

M4 OR SAW/DOUBLE AMMO LOAD/.45

This mission pits you against some of your toughest opposition as you must make your way into the heart of an enemy encampment and steal a laptop loaded with important information. Weapon selection is very important, since stealth won't aid you much as you make your way toward the camp — you'll probably want a large caliber hole-puncher and a double load of ammo to deal with the sheer number of guards and patrols.

Dust to Dust

M4 OR SAW/DOUBLE AMMO LOAD OR LAW/SPEC OPS .45

In this mission, you need to destroy a communications dish located in a heavily defended town, but firepower alone won't get you inside. Patrols and reinforcements from the immediate area are able to put up a very tough fight, and you have to cover a lot of open ground to get in range. Instead, use the range and firepower of the M4 or SAW to clear enough of the hostiles so you can get close enough to target the dish with the LAW rocket. Since you must survive long enough to make the extraction point, don't enter the town until you're certain it's clear.

CHAD \ DUST TO DUST: [illegible] proposition, if you're feeling especially stealthy, you just might make it.

Metal Hammer

M4 DOUBLE AMMO/SPEC OPS .45

You'll need to have your shooting and movement skills honed to a high degree during this night assault on an enemy held town as you'll have to cross a large expanse of open ground to reach the first of its many buildings. Select the M4 and a double load of ammo, and use the rifle's scoped abili ties and grenades to clear a path to the nearest buildings, then use the cover provided to penetrate the stronghold and take out the remaining troops.

Full Stop

.50 CALIBER SNIPER RIFLE/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

Forget about rushing in with guns-blazing in this challenging hostage rescue mission — you'll need to be at complete ease with the sniper rifle to eliminate enemy guard towers, patrols and machine gun nests that surround the base where the hostage is held. Though a head on assault is possible with the M4 or SAW, the odds are cer-tainly not in your favor, as reinforce-ments from the surrounding area seem limitless. Instead, find a spot near the insertion point to pick off the patrols and guard towers first (they have the range and mobility to reach you), then work your way closer in to take out the remaining troops that are dug in. Once inside the camp, be wary of reinforce ments and guards inside buildings before you attempt to locate the hostage, and be sure leave yourself enough ammo to cover your retreat to the extraction zone.

Campaign: Indonesia

Jump Start

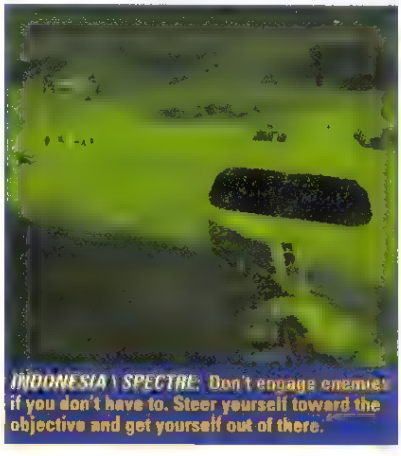
M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SPEC OPS .45

Guard towers, machine gun nests, and lots of soldiers add up to a rough and tumble firefight for you and your team as you attempt to put an end to the enemy's efforts in this region. The trick to winning this battle is to move into a sniping position overlooking the camp and stir up the soldiers with a hail of gunfire. The ensuing mayhem should give you plenty of opportunity to clear out the bulk of the enemy forces, leaving you and your team with the job of mopping up the remaining forces in house-clearing exercises.

Spectre

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SPEC OPS .45

It seems another third-world dictator has been foolish enough to put his plans for destruction on a laptop com-puter, and it's up to you to retrieve it — but this time around, you've got your work cut out for you. The base is too heavily guarded to use stealth to enter the compound, and intel has gener-ously provided you with the most dan-gerous route to the objective. After selecting a weapon with a little kick to it, like the M4 or the SAW, give the first section of the base a wide berth and focus your efforts on locating the black mesh field tent that contains the desired laptop. Don't try to win this one



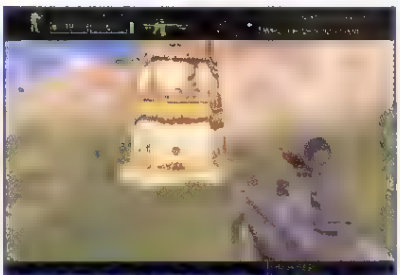
INDONESIA \ SPECTRE: Don't engage enemies if you don't have to. Steer yourself toward the objective and get yourself out of there.

with Rambo-like heroics, just get yourself close enough to the objective to make your move, and you'll be in and out before they know what hit 'em.

Safe Passage

M4 OR SAW/DOUBLE AMMO
SPEC OPS .45

In this mission, you're assisting the locals in protecting a presidential convoy through hostile territory after your team receives reports that suggest the rebels may use this opportunity to attack. Once you enter the game, preempt the rebel attack by firing a few rounds into the air to put the local troops on the defensive, then head over the hill to the right of the road to eliminate several enemy soldiers and vehicles before they have a chance to strike. The local troops will be able to defend the limo for much of the mission, so concentrate your efforts on wiping out enemy units before they have a chance to threaten the convoy.



INDONESIA \ BLACKJACK: In this heavily defended level, you're up against outrageous odds, so keep your eyes planted on the prize.

Blackjack

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

A bomb has been planted near some ancient ruins, and you've got to defuse it, but the enemy has very heavy defenses guarding the site, making it nearly impossible to do a proper search of the location. Instead of making a head-on assault through the heart of the base, take an indirect approach to the ruins nearest your start location using the suppressed pistol to eliminate patrols, and your grenade launcher to silence any entrenched guards. Once the objective is reached, count the mission complete.

Shut Down

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SUPPRESSED PISTOL

Until now, enemy base defenses have resulted in predictable engagements, but in this kill 'em-all scenario, the enemy has the upper hand. This jungle base is spread out over several hills and valleys with numerous guard towers and lots of patrols, so care and caution are the watchwords for this mission. Use the varied terrain to mask your approach, and use silenced weapons where appropriate to minimize your presence. Though the pre-defined waypoints aren't particularly useful in planning your approach, they will keep you from becoming too disoriented as you make your way from hill to hill.

INDONESIA \ LOCK DOWN: Your first brightest idea. Use the sniper rifle to pick off patrols and guard towers, then make your move inside.

Lock Down

50 CALIBER SNIPER RIFLE/DOUBLE AMMO/SPEC OPS .45 PISTOL

This base assault is a tactical nightmare that forces you to cross open ground to enter a heavily defended encampment surrounded by towers, gun emplacements, and bunkers. Though a head on assault will work, the heavy patrols and crossfire from defenders makes it dangerous work. Instead, use the sniper rifle to pick off defenders and patrols, and work your way in to finish off the rest when most of the shooting has been quelled.

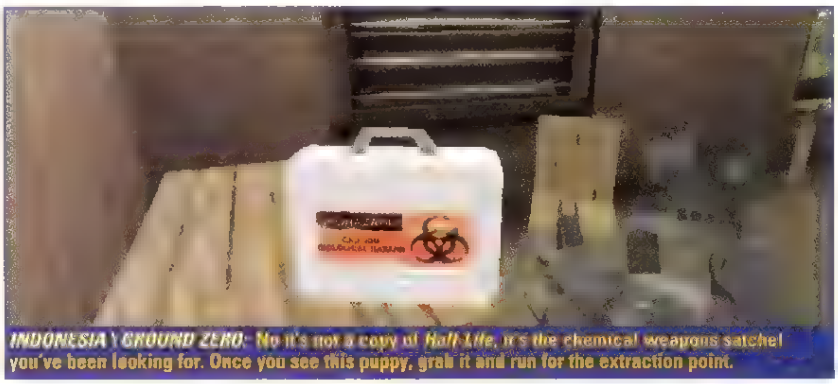
Ground Zero

M4/DOUBLE AMMO/SPEC OPS .45

Chemical weapons ingredients have been spotted inside a well defended base and you're sent to retrieve it. Forget about stealth or using the sniper rifle, as you'll have a lot of ground to cover to retrieve the satchel containing the chemicals. The secret to success on this mission is single mindedness; simply keep your eyes on the prize and eliminate any "obstacles" between you and your goal, ignoring the chaos and mayhem around you.

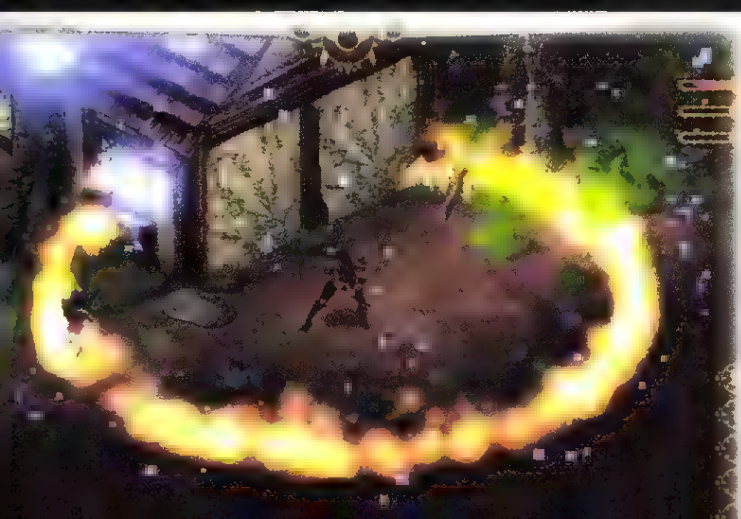
...TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH!

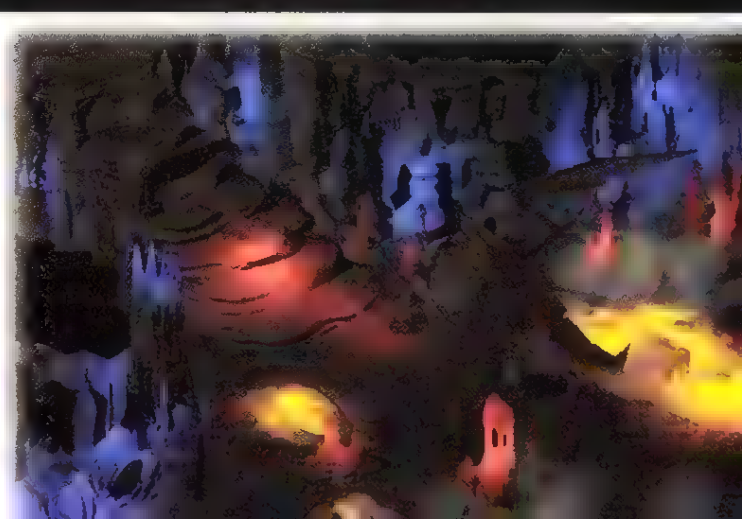
STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 154

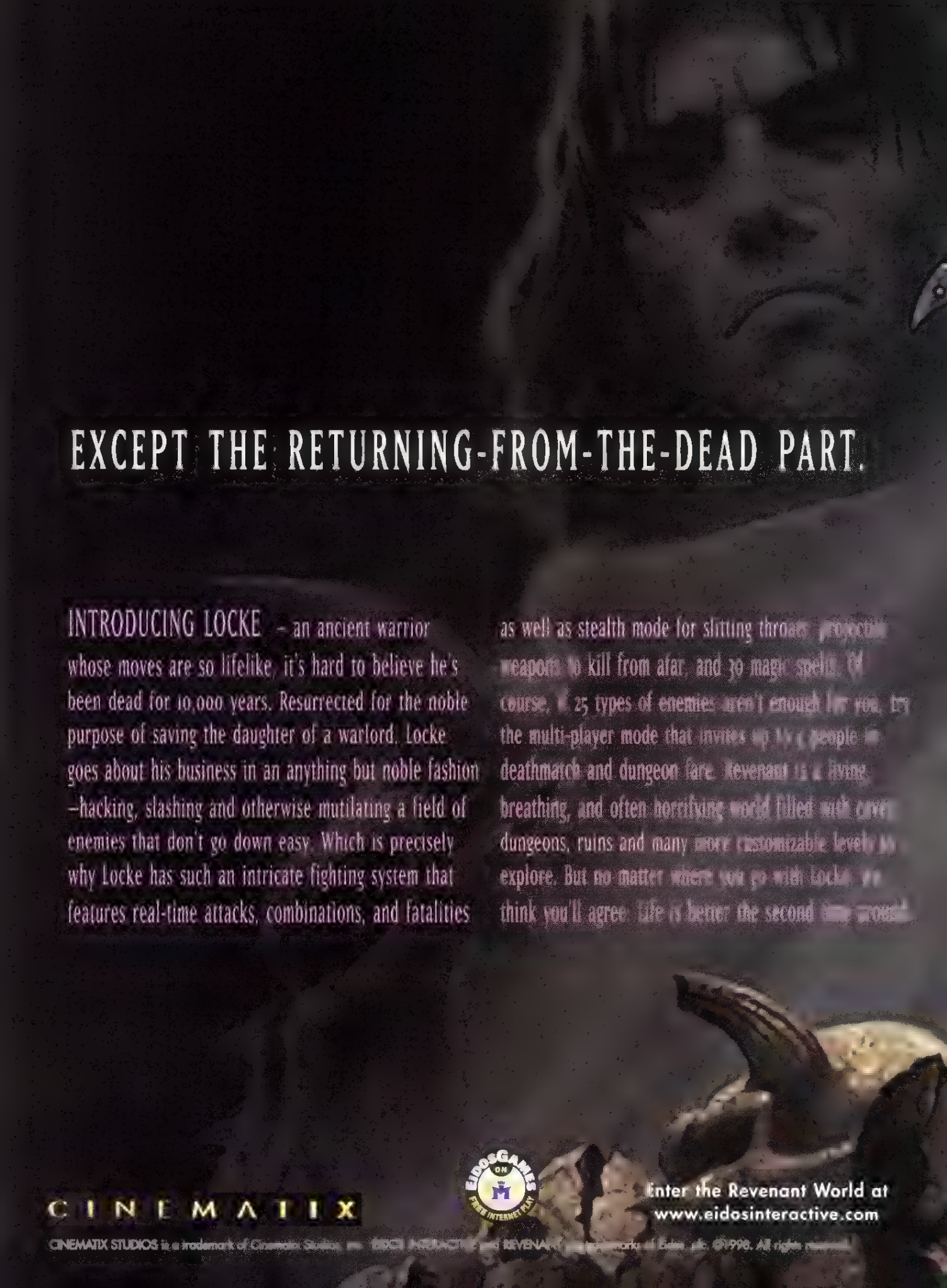


INDONESIA \ GROUND ZERO: No it's not a copy of *Half-Life*, it's the chemical weapons satchel you've been looking for. Once you see this puppy, grab it and run for the extraction point.

EVERY MOVE IS PATTERNED AFTER REAL HUMAN BEINGS...






EXCEPT THE RETURNING-FROM-THE-DEAD PART.
INTRODUCING LOCKE – an ancient warrior whose moves are so lifelike, it's hard to believe he's been dead for 10,000 years. Resurrected for the noble purpose of saving the daughter of a warlord, Locke goes about his business in an anything but noble fashion –hacking, slashing and otherwise mutilating a field of enemies that don't go down easy. Which is precisely why Locke has such an intricate fighting system that features real-time attacks, combinations, and fatalities
as well as stealth mode for slitting throats
weapons to kill from afar, and 30 magic spells.
course, 25 types of enemies aren't enough for you,
the multi-player mode that invites up to 4 people
deathmatch and dungeon fare. Revenant is a living,
breathing, and often horrifying world filled with
dungeons, ruins and many more customizable levels
explore. But no matter where you go with Locke,
think you'll agree. Life is better the second time around.
CINEMATIX
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Enter the Revenant World at
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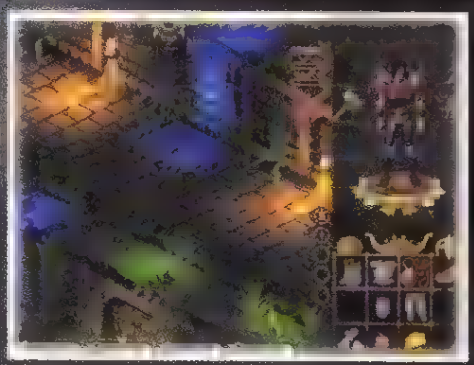
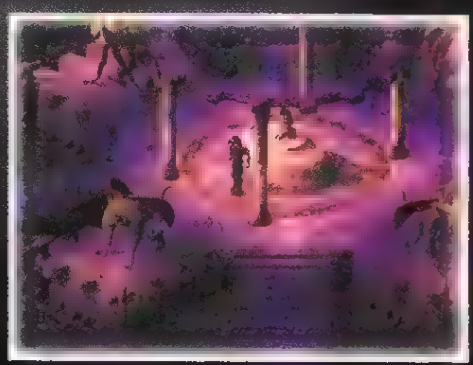
REVENANT

One lifetime isn't enough





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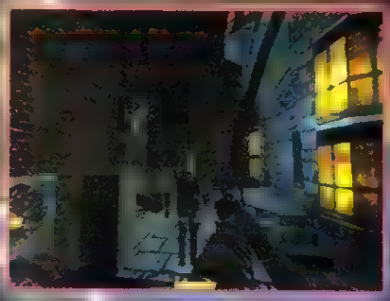

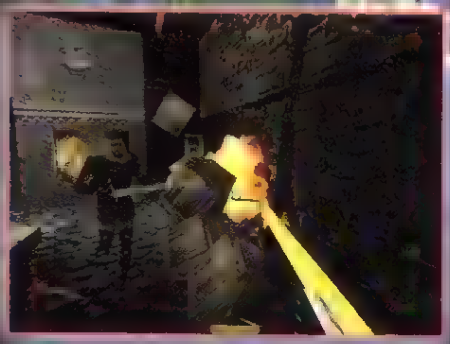

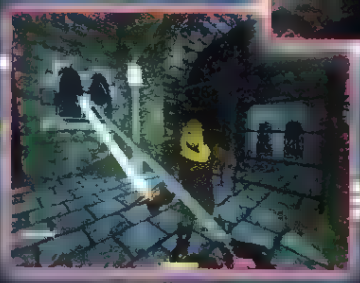

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THIEF

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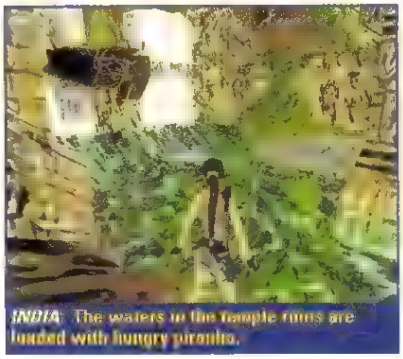
Tomb Raider III

Intrepid explorer Lara Croft is back for her third adventure, and we've got a great complete walkthrough, direct from Eidos. So what are you waiting for?

INDIA: In the jungles of India, keep your eyes peeled for monkeys and proceed with caution.



INDIA: The waters in the temple ruins are loaded with hungry piranha.

India

THE JUNGLE

Don't miss the game's first secret! Move forward and start sliding down a huge mudslide. Immediately jump and veer off to the left where you will land in a safe spot under some brush where you can retrieve the shotgun. As you make your way down the mudslide, be sure and leap over the spike pits. This level is pretty straightforward with few enemies (several tigers here and there) and just a few traps to negotiate. Try and find all the pick ups you can, especially flares. There are a lot of flares to pick up, and you'll need them later.

Pay attention to the monkeys in India. Sometimes they'll lead you to a switch you may need to throw, but other times you'll go into the path of a rolling boulder! The last monkey you encounter in the jungle will try and run off with the Indra Key (needed to exit the level). Either pick it up before he can snatch it or persuade it out of him with your pistols.

TEMPLE RUINS

Things are going to get difficult quickly and the Temple Ruins is one of the longest levels in *Tomb Raider III*. Be on the lookout for snakes. As soon as you trigger one, hop backward and kill it from a safe distance. If you get bitten, the poison will start eating away at your health. Try and find a green energy booster before wasting a small medipack to heal yourself.

There are a couple of paths that will lead you into a large water area filled with piranha fish. Jump to the center block first, then to the switch on the other side. Throw the switch and swim to the next huge mudslide area. This will eventually lead you into the ruins for your showdown with the six-armed Shiva statues. The statues are fairly easy to defeat if you use your pistols and be patient.

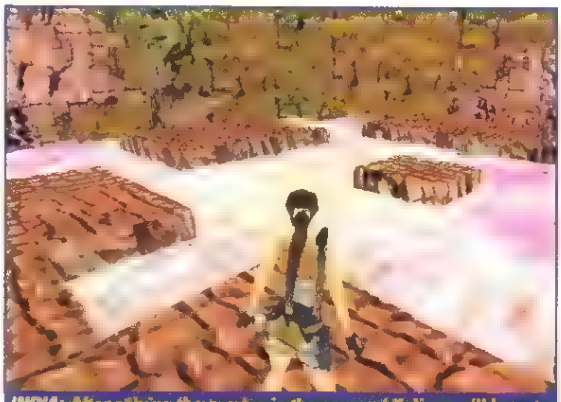
You'll need to find the first two Ganesha Keys in order to open the gate in the room where you defeated the first living Shiva statue. The path to the right of the gate will eventually lead you to a moving spike wall trap (and the first Ganesha Key), while the path to the left is a bit sneakier. You'll eventually swim into an area where you can work your way upward (by jumping from spot to spot along the walls). When you reach the top, dodge the rolling boulder, dart traps, and slicing blades and jump to the green health crystal. There's a block here that you must move in order to make your way back. Pay attention to the other moveable blocks in this area; there's a switch hidden behind them that floods an area where you need to throw an underwater lever to get that other Ganesha Key. Use both keys to open the gate, and watch out for the spiked ceiling! The next big challenge is defeating another two Shiva statues and picking up the scimitars that they drop. Plug these swords into the Shiva statue upstairs to proceed to the next area. You're almost finished with Temple Ruins. Obtain the last three Ganesha Keys in this final area and use them to exit the level.

RIVER GANGES

Time for some quad bike action! Depending on how quickly you want to finish this level, there are two paths you can take (after making a few jumps and opening the gate). The right-hand path is the more time consuming of the two. Jump the river to arrive at a large gate. You'll need to

INDIA: Your trusty quad bike will help you get past the River Ganges unscathed.

get off the bike, find two Gate Keys and use them in the temple ruins to open the gate so you can get the quad bike through. There's also a switch located near the second Gate Key that you need to throw in order to proceed after jumping the quad bike over the quick-sand pit. From here, it's pretty easy. Take care of the vultures and dive into the large pool of water at the end of the line. Swim behind the waterfall to exit the level.



INDIA: After solving the puzzles in the caves of Kalia, you'll have to choose your next destination: Nevada, London, or the South Pacific.

If you decided to take the path to the left, you probably won't encounter any problems. Just be careful when driving the quad bike along the narrow mountain trails. If you fall in the water, you'll die. Make your way to the exit as described above.

CAVES OF KALIYA

Time to fight the first boss — that crazed character you encountered at the end of the first level. It's easy to get lost quickly in the cave maze while on your way to the showdown with the boss, so pay close attention to the leaf pattern on the floor. From the level start, go to your left and follow the green leaf pattern. This will eventually lead you to the cobra pit Watch your step here as there are snakes to deal with in the dark as well as a rolling boulder trap. When this section is cleared, slide down the ramp to the boss area. Start shooting right away with your best weapon and keep moving from platform to platform while shooting. If any burning debris hits you, you'll catch fire and die. When the boss is defeated, collect the goodies and the Infada Stone and exit the level. From this point in the game, you get to choose your next adventure (Nevada, London, or the South Pacific). Nevada is the best bet at this point.

Nevada

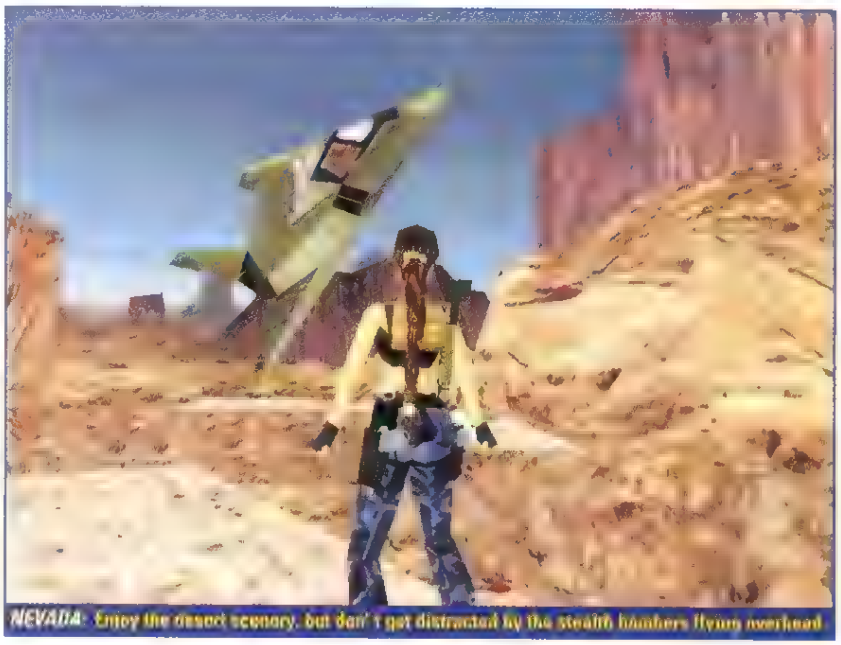
NEVADA DESERT

Shoot the buzzards and make your way forward, following the canyon to the right. Walk along the ledge after the stealth fly-by and jump to the small ledge on your right. Follow this path until you're facing the large rock formation above the quicksand. Do a run ning jump'n'grab to the other side and drop down through the waterhole. Swim through the tunnel until you can get out of the water and proceed into the large canyon area. Make your way right until you run out of real estate. Jump across the gorge and make your way toward the large waterfall. You'll see another couple of stealth bombers fly by as you make your way. Pay attention to the detonator on the right because you'll need to obtain the key for it and eventually backtrack to this location. As you make your way into the area above the waterfall, be very careful not to fall into the water, as you'll get swept over the falls and need to climb all the way back up again! You'll encounter a baddie near a large contraption. Take care of him and climb the ladder on the machine up to the aqueduct looking area. Make your way to the dam, jump into the water, and find the underwater switch that opens the gate into the dam structure. Swim through this opening and throw another two switches so you can get out, inside the top of the dam. Finally, press the button on the wall that raises the detonator key up to where you can pick it up. Take this key back to the detonator and blow a hole in the canyon. As you enter this new area, you'll encounter electric fences, more baddies and rattlesnakes. Your goal is to find the quad bike and jump it over a fence in another area to exit the level.

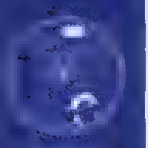
HIGH SECURITY COMPOUND

As the level starts, you'll notice that you have no weapons. No need to worry because there are other inmates in this prison who will help you out. Simply unlock as many cells as you can and watch as your new friends take care of the guards for you. After breaking out of your cell, find the cell with the move able block and start down the path to freedom. The rest of the level isn't too

NEVADA: Once you make it to the area above the waterfall, try not to fall back down!



NEVADA: Enjoy the desert scenery, but don't get distracted by the stealth bombers flying overhead

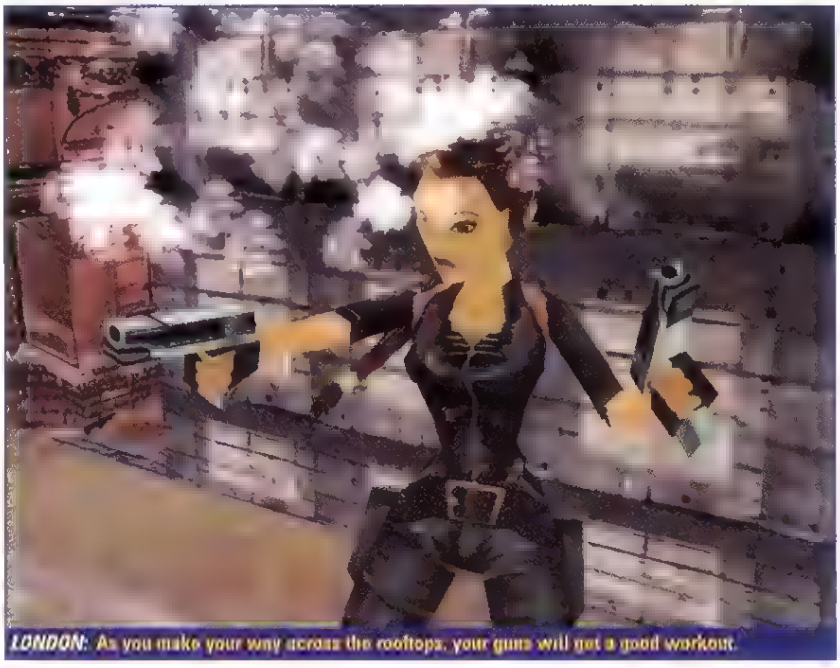


Tomb Raider II

tough. You'll need to be patient and remember to open every cell you see as you make your way through the level. If you don't free the other prisoners to help you fight the guards, you won't make it very far. There is also an area near the end of the level where you need to 'sneak' past a guard and get rid of him by activating a laser trap. You'll also find your guns (and the Desert Eagle) late into the level. To exit the level, climb into the back of the truck and relax for a moment as you make your way to Area 51.

AREA 51

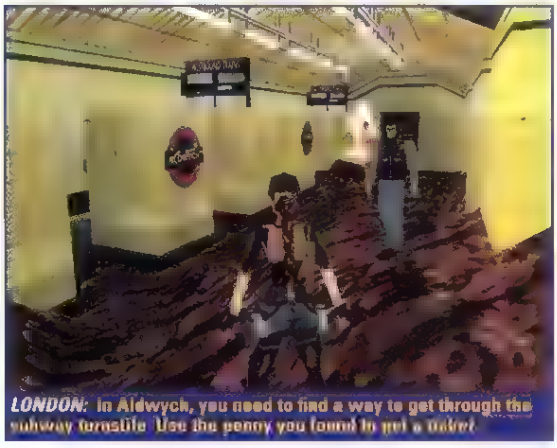
The key to surviving Area 51 is to kill the guards before they can run to (and activate) any alarm boxes. Early on in this level, Lara must duck and crawl in order to bypass a moving laser trap. There are more prisoners being held in Area 51. Again, it's in your best interest to free them and allow them to kill guards for you throughout the level. Get the Code Clearance Disc from the guard in the missile silo and use it in the terminal in the rocket room. Be careful not to trip any laser traps on the floor or they will set off the overhead machine guns. Using this disc allows you to access the upper area (above the conveyor belt area) where you'll find the Hangar Access Key. Get into the hangar area and be careful not to touch the tracks, or you'll be electrocuted. Eventually, you'll open the doors to the UFO area. You'll need to make your way up in order to retrieve the Launch Code Pass, which is sitting on top of the UFO. Time to launch that missile! Make sure you immediately run into the rear of the blast room, or you'll be burned alive by the missile's rocket blast. You can now climb up the silo. Kill the guards and obtain the other Code Clearance Disc. Use this disc in the UFO Room. You can now climb into the UFO from below and exit the level and Nevada.


LONDON: As you make your way across the rooftops, your guns will get a good workout.

London

THAMES WHARF

You now find yourself on London's rooftops. To make a very long story short, you'll need to make your way carefully to the building opposite your starting point. Next, you'll need to obtain the Flue Room Key from a guard in this building. When you eventually make it to the Flue Room, you can throw a switch that turns off the flames in the tunnel where you need to go. You'll wind up in a room with three covered switches, and a switch that raises the water level up and down in the later areas. Make sure the water level is lowered before trying to swim past the two huge blades on your way to the yellow robot room. You'll need to maneuver the steel crate into a position where you can force the yellow robot to open the glass on one of the covered switches. After some more switch-throwing and careful monkey-swinging, you will finally be able to swim into a gothic-looking cathedral structure. Climb out and up, back into the night. Be careful of the barb wire as you jump and walk towards the exit.


LONDON: In Aldwych, you need to find a way to get through the subway turnstile. Use the penny you found to get a ticket.

ALDWYCH

After some careful maneuvering toward the beginning of the level, you'll drop into one of the ticket booths from above and obtain the Maintenance Room Key. Take this key to the correct subway platform, open the door, and throw the switch inside. This switch turns on the lights, and you'll see the old penny lying on the floor upon exiting the Maintenance Room. Take the penny to the middle ticket booth, use it, and pick up the Subway Ticket from the floor. This ticket will allow you to get through the turnstiles in a later area. The rest of the level is extremely tough, and we don't have enough space to go into further detail. Let's just say that you'll need to obtain two Solomon Keys in order to get the Masonic Mallet. Be sure to pick up the Ornate Star from behind the curtain in the same room. Take both these items to the area you gained access to by using the subway ticket. You'll eventually reach the exit.

LUD'S GATE

This is probably one of the toughest levels in the game. Take care of the goons and make your way to the Egyptian-looking area. After pushing/pulling a series of blocks, you'll eventually get in a position where you can monkey-swing out of

this huge area. Find the embalming fluid and make your way back to the beginning of the level. The fluid moves the sofa and reveals a new passage. This path leads you to the Underwater Propulsion Vehicle (UPV). There are lots of goodies hidden throughout the area (and air pockets to breathe). Get the Boiler Room Key from one of the guards and find the next UPV. You'll need to throw some underwater levers and fight some gators and frogmen before having to get by the pistons without getting crushed. Use the Boiler Room Key and make your way back to the UPV and go through the newly opened gate. The exit and the London boss are next

THE CITY

Time for the showdown with the London Boss. Don't try shooting Sophia since none of your weapons will do any good against her. Instead, keep moving and avoid her laser blasts. Try and time your climbs jumps as Sophia recharges her laser attack. Carefully make your way to the electrical switchbox and shoot it till it overloads. This overload will kill Sophia for you (it shocks the metal bridge she was standing on). Pick up the artifact, and you're off to the South Pacific.

South Pacific

COASTAL VILLAGE

These levels should seem fairly straightforward after your experience in London. There are two paths you can take in order to make it into the jungle hut area. The first path involves picking up the Smuggler's Key (underwater to the right of your start point) and using it in the large hut on the beach. The second path begins at the beach where you can run through a cave into a valley. From here, you'll need to obtain three Serpent Stones in order to meet up with the other path. From this point, find the switch near the huge quicksand pit that enables you to reach the other half of the village. Climb into the treehouse, find the switch (in another treehouse) that allows you to get by the flame trap, and turn the dial that opens the gate in the water. Swim through this gate and make your way to the final treehouse and level exit.

SOUTH PACIFIC: You need to find two keys to complete your mission at the crash site.

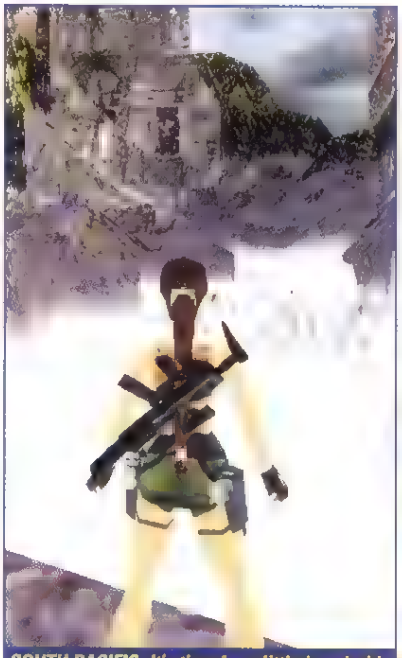
CRASH SITE

Use the Swamp Map to make your way across the huge quicksand pit. You'll encounter a couple of raptors on your way to the crashed plane. You need to find two keys. The first (Commander Bishop's) is in the T-Rex area and the second (Lt. Tuckerman's) is in the raptor room on the other side of the piranha-infested river. Be sure to shoot the raptor carcass from the treetops into the water in order to lure the piranhas away from you. When you've obtained both keys, you'll need to make your way on top of the plane via a difficult monkey-swing puzzle. Use both keys in the plane's cockpit and release the big gun from the rear of the plane. Use the big gun to blow away the wall covering the level's exit.

SOUTH PACIFIC: At the coastal village, you have to decide which of two routes to take to get to the jungle hut area.

MADUBU GORGE

Time for some white-water river rafting. Be careful not to fall into the river, or you'll die a terrible death. You need to locate one of the two kayaks and ride it down to the huge plug at the end of the river. From here, you can row up one of the openings and climb out of the kayak. From this point, you'll need to carefully monkey-swing, climb, and jump your way back upstream (without falling in the drink). You'll reach a rope swing that takes you to an area where you can throw a switch. This will raise the big plug. Once the plug is raised, hop back into your kayak and carefully row down into the new area. Throwing the underwater switch opens the exit.



SOUTH PACIFIC: It's time for a little kayak ride down the Madubu Gorge.

TEMPLE OF PUNA

You've reached the South Pacific Boss stage. Avoid the blow darts and make your way to the massive, rolling blade trap. Time your jumps and throw the four switches that open the next area. Pull out the block to stop the ceiling blades and throw the switches to meet up with the boss. Take him out, retrieve the artifact and you're off to the game's last location — Antarctica.

SOUTH PACIFIC: Many deadly traps must be avoided in the Temple of Puna.

Antarctica

ANTARCTICA

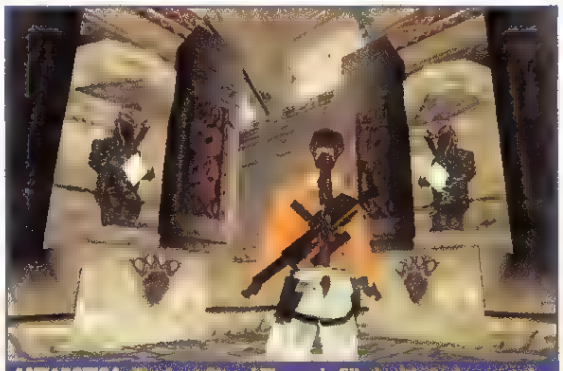
The first thing to note is that jumping or falling into the freezing water causes you damage, so be careful. Make your way to the opposite side of the large tanker and monkey-swing your way on board. Take care of the goons and lower the yellow raft from the tanker. Get off the tanker and get into the raft. Cruise around the perimeter of the tanker and motor all the way down the canal until you can hop out to your right. From here, you can monkey-swing into the next area. You'll need to find the crowbar and turn the gas valves correctly in order to restore power. Once power has been restored, obtain the Gate Control Key and open the water doorway so you can drive the boat to the exit.

RX-TECH MINES

Time for some mine cart action! Start with the middle cart, and you'll eventually find the crowbar. You'll need the crowbar to obtain the Lead Acid Battery from the main mine cart area. Hop in the bottom mine cart next and you'll soon discover a Winch Starter (underwater). With the Winch Starter and Battery in hand, take the top mine cart to where you can climb out and use the two items. They will lower the yellow submersible deep into the cold water. You'll have to carefully maneuver through the icy water in order to reach the end of the level.

LOST CITY OF TINNOS

Find the first Uli Key and gain access to the switch puzzle. The combination is (left to right) first two switches: on, next two: off and last one: on. Make your way past the attacking wasps in the new area and past the swinging torches. After solving some room puzzles and dealing with some mutant baddies, you'll find yourself in an area with four walkways. You'll need to obtain an Oceanic Mask from each themed area (total of four). Use all four masks along with another Uli Key to turn off the huge power beam in the center of the area. When the beam has been shut off, hop into the hole and exit the level.

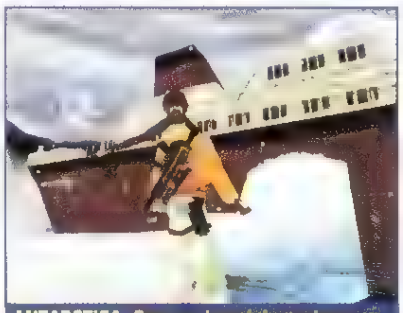


ANTARCTICA: The Lost City of Tinnos is filled with devious puzzles you need to solve. Find the Uli Key to access the switch puzzle.

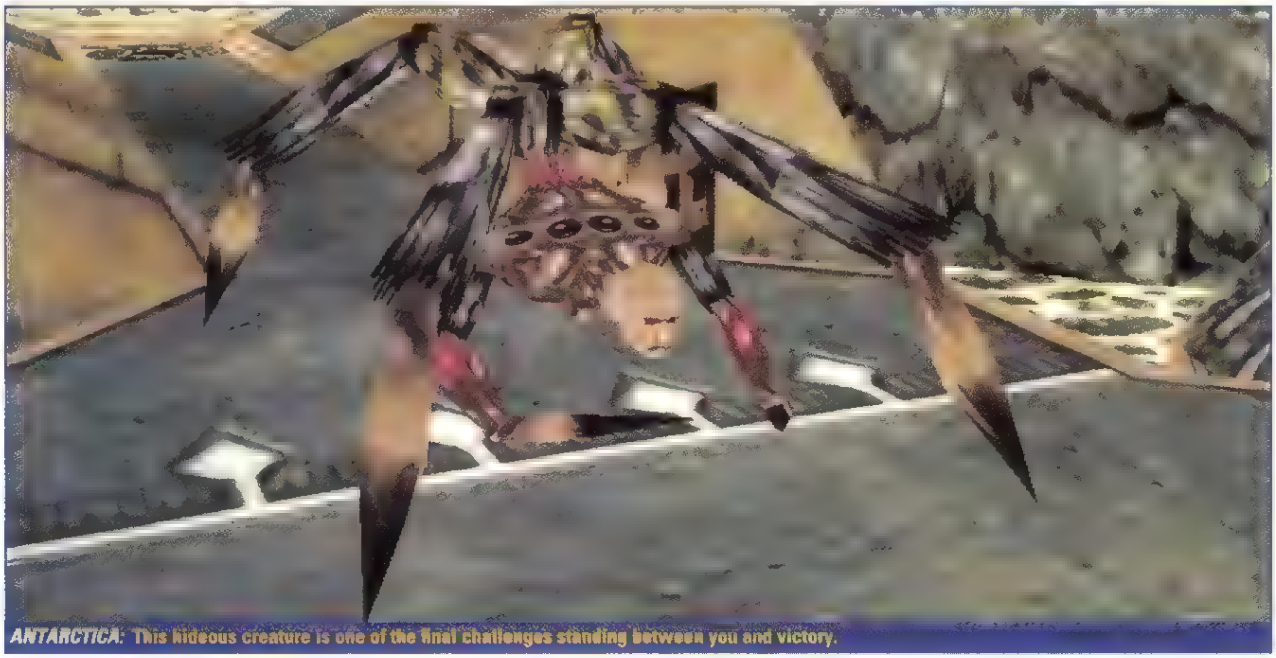
METEORITE CAVERN

You've made it to the last level. You must defeat the mutant spider boss before trying to climb out of the pit. Get out your most powerful weapon (Desert Eagle if you have it) and shoot the spider until he's stunned. Make sure you keep a safe distance between yourself and the spider, otherwise he'll let loose a laser blast, which instantly kills you. While the spider is stunned, sprint down one of the hallways and retrieve the artifact, then sprint back before the spider awakens. Repeat this pattern until you have all four artifacts. You should now be able to kill the spider. Once he's dead, climb up and out of the pit and finish off the remaining guards before hopping onto the chopper and riding off into the sunset. PCG

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 161A



ANTARCTICA: Once on board the tanker, you need to find the yellow raft.



ANTARCTICA: This hideous creature is one of the final challenges standing between you and victory.

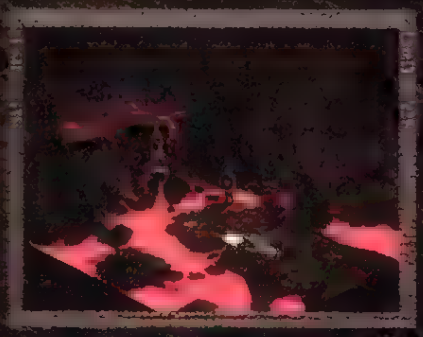
clans

As Legends foretold, evil has returned to the land. A dark tide of death and destruction is now raging over your once-peaceful realm, turning brother against brother, clan against clan. Summon your courage and raise your sword for a fight to the death against a demonic monster who feeds on hatred and despair.

Battle as o… …que characters each poss… …strengths and abilities.

Conquer m… …and mythical beasts in thousands o… …hundreds of miles of dangerous lands.

Cast sp… …ver… …interact with… …ordinary characters and destroy evil incarnate.



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RATING PENDING RP

Strategy First

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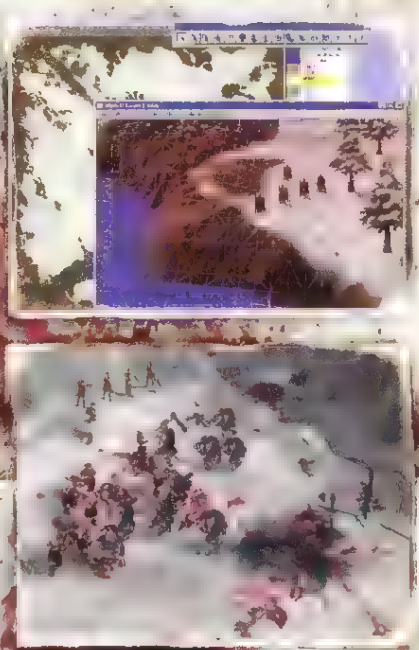
TAKE THE HILL. THE EARTH TREMBLING. BLACK WITH BLOOD. HEAVY FOOTSTEPS DISSOLVE INTO A STEADY RHYTHM OF THUNDEROUS BLASTS. MINDS AND LEGS NUMB. GET TO THE HILL. FIERY ARROWS RAINING FROM ABOVE. BLACK WAKES WEAVING A SUFFOCATING BLANKET OF FEAR. MY MEN CHOKING THEIR FINAL BREATHS. JUST MAKE IT TO THE HILL. SCREAMS FROM BEHIND? ARE WE FLANKED? SHADOWS ADVANCING LIKE A DEATH SHROUD. THE HILL. GET TO THE HILL.



6 December
The Beachhead at Tyr
You're losing men. Can you keep your composure? In Myth II: Soulblighter, panic is your greatest enemy. It's up to you to remain calm and focused during the frenzy of battle. You devise the strategies. You make the crucial decisions. Move forward with the mission and risk massive casualties, or retreat and live to fight another day? Time is running out. The wrong decision may cost you half your men. No decision will cost you your entire army. What's it going to be?
To order Myth II: Soulblighter call 1-800-295-0060 or visit our website at www.bungie.com.
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Why NOT another RACING SIM?

With Jeff Gordon on board, we had one decision, Racing Sim or not ?
Fortunately, everyone agreed --
the world didn't need another Racing Sim.

First of all, if you've seen Jeff on the racetrack, you already know that he's all about **action** and **excitement**. So it came as no surprise to hear that the game he wanted to make was **action** and **excitement times 10.** It's not that he didn't have an interest in doing a racing simulation, but even the average gamer knows that simulations never really capture the full, real life experience - whether it be racing, flying, or battle games. Well, if this is the case, imagine how much less a racing simulation mimicked the actual racing experience to a professional race car driver who also happens to be a **three-time Winston Cup Champion.**

Also, keep in mind that simulations don't always equal **fun.** For example, the few racing simulations that came the closest to being '**realistic**' were loaded with the small details such as tweaking a car's performance to shave a fraction of a second off lap times. While this helps to create a more realistic experience, it doesn't necessarily make a game **fun.**

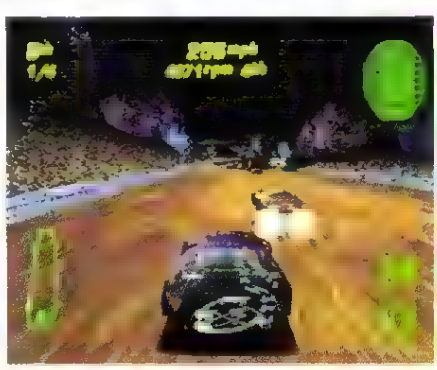
So, if it were possible to capture the **excitement** of professional stock car racing in a video game, than we would have gone that route and created the best racing sim ever. However, since it's almost impossible to simulate the experience that Jeff feels behind the wheel of his own race car, we decided to create a game that makes up for it in other ways by providing **a whole new racing experience.**

For us, it was about being a smart driver and thinking on your toes at 300 MPH.

You see, **Jeff** always felt that racing simulations never really captured the **speed**, the **competition**, and the pulse-pounding exhilaration of jockeying for position while flying by another car at **over 200 miles an hour - We totally agreed.**

In the end, that's what it came down to: Racing Sim vs. Fun Arcade Racer. So, the direction we decided to take was to keep it somewhat grounded in reality with a physics model that players could actually feel, while giving them a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment, but at the same time, making the game easily accessible.

To accomplish this and get the level of competition we all wanted, it quickly became clear we must heighten the experience. Oval tracks and straight-always are exciting when you've got a screaming engine over your shoulder and howling wind rattling both windows, but on a computer screen - that just won't cut it.



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Windows® 95
PC CD-ROM

PlayStation

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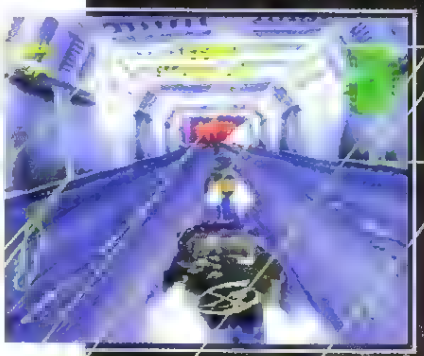
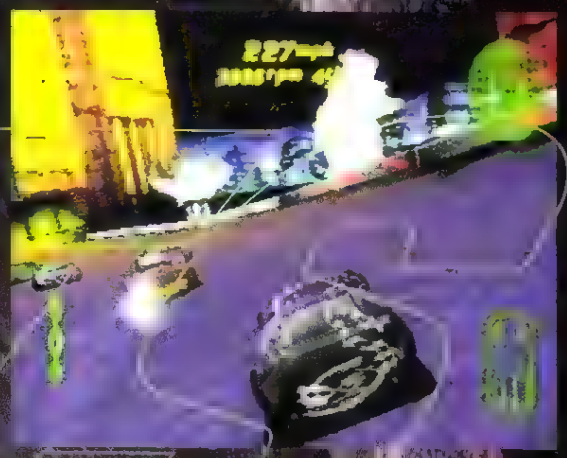
So, we projected competitive stock car racing into a world where boundaries didn't exist. We took the liberty to assume that cars would get **faster** and **faster** and track designs would become more **exciting** and **dangerous**. These are the elements that would make this game more **competitive** and **challenging** and separate us from all other racing games. **And guess what? *The more outrageous we made the tracks, the more fun - not to mention fast - the game became.*** **Think** about it for a minute: with a realistic physics model, how fast does a two-ton race car have to be going to make it through a 360 degree loop? As you might imagine **- it has to be going very, very fast.**

This is when we realized that we were on the right track. Ironically, creating an exaggerated idea of what racing might be helped to capture the **mad adrenaline rush** that everyone who's ever driven a real race car feels in their bones, in a way that more serious and detailed sims just couldn't.

"The more outrageous we made the tracks, the more fun - not to mention fast - the game became."



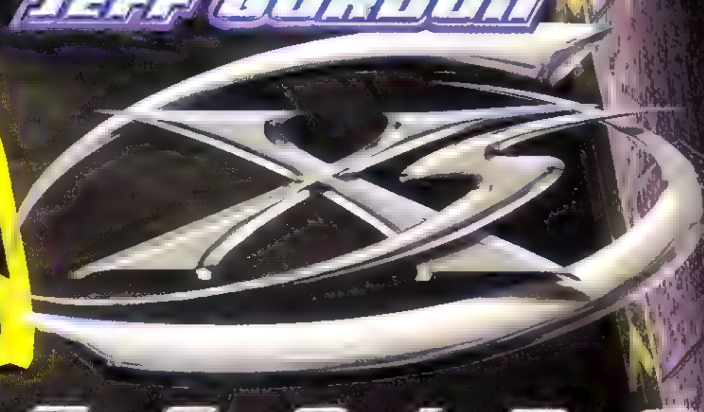


So why not another Racing Sim?

Simple.

Sims have limits.
JEFF GORDON® XS RACING™ DOESN'T.

JEFF GORDON



R A C I N G

Hardcore Gamer

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ASC GAMES

Caesar III

All you'll ever need to know to build the perfect Roman city is contained within this invaluable guide to all of the game's structures. Come, see, and conquer!

Prosperity = Power!

As Governor, you must achieve certain "ratings" per mission to achieve promotion and the Emperor's increased favor. These ratings apply to Peace, Prosperity, Culture, and Imperial Favor. And the greatest of these is Prosperity. Without it, you quickly run out of money, your cities deteriorate, your population may riot, and the Emperor may turn against you.

Your first priority is to estab ish a good cashflow situation. In the first months, your citizens do not need an elaborate system of farms, granaries, warehouses, and markets; they'll immigrate into tent-cities and forage for sustenance. You will need to create road networks, zones for housing, prefectures for fire and crime prevention, engineers to maintain the infrastructure, and enough temples to keep the gods off your back. Once you have surplus labor, put it to work creating trade routes. When you turn a profit, use the excess cash to upgrade your city.

About 90% of Prosperity is computed on the basis of the quality of housing and is loaded in favor of your best housing. If, for instance, your city contains a Grand Insulae, the city's tota Prosperity reaches a ceiling of 60%.

You need only a few luxury dwellings to boost your total rating to the elusive but desirable goal of 100%. A city comprising 0-5% tents, 80 85% small insulae, and 20% luxury palaces can reach the magic rating of 100%.

But of course, in the delicately balanced system of *Caesar III*, "upgrading" a structure is also dependent on the "desirability" of the neighborhood in which it is located. So we've compiled an alphabetical listing of every structure in the game, along with the information you need as to its cost, location, and impact on desirability. We'd like to thank *Caesar III* expert Dan Ban, who first worked out the upgrade/desirability formulae for all the residences in the game, for giving us a starting point.

The Structures

Academy

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes.
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 30
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn
OTHER: Provides education; raises Culture rating moderately.

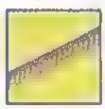
Actors' Colony

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 5
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Increases entertainment for city; supplies personnel for theaters and amphitheaters.
NOTE: Although 't might seem logical to build the Actors' Colony close to the theater, it actually yields higher entertainment value if it's placed some distance away, so that the actors have to travel to reach their places of employment — the theory being that, as they stroll to work, they'll entertain people by with recitations, mime schtick, with-'t jokes about the Senate in Rome, and impersonations of Ethyl Merman.

Amphitheater

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 12
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn.
OTHER: Raises entertainment rating for a considerable radius; provides employment for gladiators and actors.

Aqueduct



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None (the water flows just fine without any help)
CONSTRUCTION COST: 8 dn. per segment
OTHER: Links reservoirs together; enhances availability of water supply.

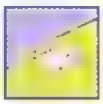
Barbershop

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 2
CONSTRUCTION COST. 25 dn.
OTHER: Slightly raises quality of health for fairly wide radius.

Barracks

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative (soldiers tend to be noisy and, whenever possible, drunk)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 150 dn.
OTHER: Improves overall security; allows forts to recruit troops.

Bath House

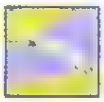


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Moderate increase in "health" over fairly wide radius.

Low Bridge

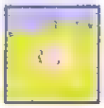
ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn. Per segment
OTHER: Facilitates traffic flow but blocks passage of ships.

Ship Bridge



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn. per segment
OTHER: Facilitates traffic and import/export trade; allows ships to pass.

Clay Pit



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST. 40 dn.
OTHER: Good investment for Industry; provides raw material for pottery.

Chariot Maker

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative

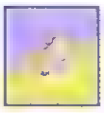
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 75 dn.
OTHER: Supplies vehicles for races in Hippodrome.

Coliseum

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes

DESIRABILITY EFFECT
Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 25
CONSTRUCTION COST: 500 dn.
OTHER: Raises level of entertainment over wide area; provides employment for lion tamers and gladiators

Dock


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Very negative (all those smelly fish and rough sailors!)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 12
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn.
OTHER. Essential for overseas trade.

Doctor's Clinic

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 5
CONSTRUCTION COST: 30 dn.
OTHER: Increases overall Health; helps prevent diseases; wards off plague within immediate neighborhood.

Engineer's Post

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 5
CONSTRUCTION COST: 30 dn.
OTHER: Maintains buildings in good state of repair.

Farm (Fruit)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT
Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Prime source of food for domestic consumption and export.

Farm (Olives)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT. Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Raw material for olive oil industry; sometimes valuable trade commodity (Caesar likes it, too — all those salads, you know).

Farm (Pigs)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative (have you ever smelled one on a warm day?)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER Industry; food source, strictly for local consumption.

Farm (Vegetables)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; food source for local consumption.

Farm (Vineyard)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes.
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; raw material for wine.

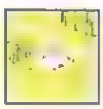
Farm (Wheat)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; most versatile and efficient source of food.

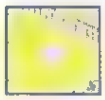
Fort

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No — troops march where they're needed but follow no pre-scripted patrol routes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Extremely negative (everybody wants the protection a fort represents, but only riff-raff want to live in its shadow)
LABORERS EMPLOYED. None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 1,000 dn.
OTHER: Security; provides base for cohorts.

Forum


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 75 dn.
OTHER: Administrative; collects taxes.

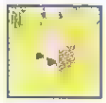
Fountain


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Varies from slight to moderate
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 4
CONSTRUCTION COST: 15 dn.
OTHER: Most desirable source of water for housing of any kind.

Garden

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 12 dn
OTHER: Engineering; can offset negative desirability of Prefectures, Markets, etc.

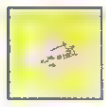
Gatehouse


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No, but there's not much point in building them away from roads
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn.
OTHER: Security; provides passage through walls; occasionally useful for moderating pathfinding routines of citizens (i.e., some will turn back rather than pass through).

Gladiator School

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative (too much sweat and clanging noises)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 8
CONSTRUCTION COST: 75 dn.
OTHER: Entertainment; provides amphitheater and coliseum with "raw material" for spectacles.

Governor's House


ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Very positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: none
CONSTRUCTION COST: 150 dn.
OTHER: Administration.

Governor's Villa

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes

DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Very positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 400 dn.
OTHER: Administration.

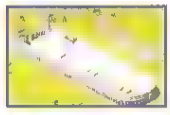
Governor's Palace

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Extremely positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 700 dn.
OTHER: Administration.

Granary

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn.
OTHER: Industry; stores food for local consumption and trade.

Hippodrome



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 150
CONSTRUCTION COST: 2,500 dn.
OTHER: Entertainment for large area of city; needs charioteers.

Hospital

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 30
CONSTRUCTION COST: 300 dn.
OTHER: Health; helps prevent plagues or greatly reduces their damage.

Iron Mine

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Industry; provides raw material for weapons.

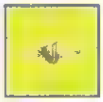
Library

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 20
CONSTRUCTION COST: 75 dn.
OTHER: Provides education, which in turn elevates "Culture" rating.

Lion Pit

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 8
CONSTRUCTION COST: 75 dn.
OTHER: Entertainment; supplies coliseum.

Marble Quarry



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Industry; allows building of oracles and large temples; good trade article.

Market

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative (smells, bustle and noise)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 5
CONSTRUCTION COST 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; distributes commodities to houses

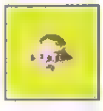
Military Academy

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 20
CONSTRUCTION COST. 1,000 dn.
OTHER: Security; soldiers trained here are better disciplined and quicker to respond.

Mission Post

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 20
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn.
OTHER. Diplomacy and education; pacifies unruly natives.

Oracle



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Very positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED· None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 200 dn., 2 units of marble
OTHER: Religion; pacifies all the gods at once and improves "Culture" rating.

Plaza

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Build on existing roads
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 15 dn.
OTHER: Engineering; improves desirability of all nearby properties.

Prefecture

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 30 dn.
OTHER: Security; patrolling prefects keep down crime and fight fires.

Reservoir

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Very negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 80 dn.
OTHER: Holds city's water supply and provides water for pipe systems, aqueducts, fountains.

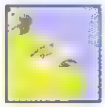
School

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST· 50 dn.
OTHER: Basic education; improves "Culture" rating.

Senate

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT. Extremely positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 30
CONSTRUCTION COST: 400 dn.
OTHER: Collects taxes over larger area than Forum; provides adminis trative stability.

Shipyard



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Extremely negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 100 dn
OTHER: Industry; builds fishing boats.

Statue, Small

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 12 dn
OTHER: Administration; improves nearby desirability.

Statue, Medium

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 60 dn.
OTHER: Administration; improves nearby desirability markedly.

Statue, Large

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT. Extremely positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 150 dn.
OTHER: Administration; dramatically improves desirability of nearby properties.

Temple, Small

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRAB LITY EFFECT: Moderately positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 2
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Religious; placates god to whom it's dedicated; raises general "Culture" rating.

Temple, Large

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABIL TY EFFECT: Extremely positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 5
CONSTRUCTION COST: 150 dn., two units of marble
OTHER: Religion; placates one god greatly; raises "Culture" rating

Theater

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 8
CONSTRUCTION COST. 50 dn.
OTHER: Raises "Culture" rating, provides "Entertainment" for about one quarter of your city's inhabitants; requires an Actors' School.

Timber Yard

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes.
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; provides raw material for furniture, a necessity for upgrading housing.

Tower

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Highly negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 150 dn.
OTHER: Cost effective security. Road-connected towers will recruit their own guards (without dipping into your other military manpower resources) and, after a few turns, will mount ballistae — heavy missile-throwing artillery capable of stopping even a Carthaginian elephant. A double wall, augmented at regular intervals by towers, is a powerful first line of defense

Triumphal Arch

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT Very positive
LABORERS EMPLOYED None
CONSTRUCTION COST: None
OTHER: A Triumphal Arch is Caesar's equivalent of the Medal of Honor; it not only marks you as one of his favorites, but reflects enormous prestige on the city as well. It means that all your citizens are proud of you and of the city you created.

Wall (Single or Double)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: None
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 12 dn. per segment
OTHER: A single wall will keep out wolves, lions and other hostile wildlife, and will give you a certain amount of protection against casual barbarian raiders. Militarily, though, it's just an impediment — it'll buy you time to react, but will not deter any really determined assault for very long. Double walls, with regularly spaced towers, really *are* formidable defenses, and if they bristle with enough ballistae, they may be sufficient to repel an invasion, even without help from your "regular" forces.

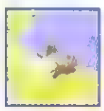
Warehouse

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 70 dn.
OTHER: Stores goods for export (or for shipment to the Emperor) and accepts imports.

Well

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? No
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Slightly negative (most people would rather get their water from fountains!)
LABORERS EMPLOYED: None
CONSTRUCTION COST: 5 dn.
OTHER: Wells suffice to make early zones of "shanty towns" inhabitable; *some* kind of water is better than no water at all But for tent dwellers to evolve into more prosperous status, fountains are needed.

Wharf



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Quite negative — people don't mind working there, but they don't want to live anywhere closer than three tiles.
LABORERS EMPLOYED. 6
CONSTRUCTION COST: 60 dn.
OTHER: Industry; services your fishing boats.

Workshop (Furniture)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST. 40 dn.
OTHER: Processes wood from Lumber Yards into furniture.

Workshop (Oil)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT. Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Industry; turns produce from Olive Farms into exportable and locally useful olive oil.

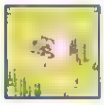
Warehouse (Pottery)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 40 dn.
OTHER: Industry; turns mined clay into pottery. As their dwellings evolve, your citizens will use a *lot* of pottery.

Warehouse (Weapons)

ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 50 dn.
OTHER: Industry; turns iron into weapons. Without weapons, you can't raise a legion because you can't arm any recruits in the Barracks. In provinces bereft of iron mines, set up import routes as soon as possible.

Workshop (Wine)



ROAD ACCESS NEEDED? Yes
DESIRABILITY EFFECT: Moderately negative
LABORERS EMPLOYED: 10
CONSTRUCTION COST: 45 dn.
OTHER: Industry; turns grapes from vineyards into wine. The Emperor likes wine and will often request inconvenient amounts of it as tribute. Use the "Stockpile" function to accumulate wine as rapidly as possible.

Dwellings

Your first settlers will find an unoccupied plot of land and simply put up a tent. But for your city to thrive (in terms of taxes, prestige, and Imperial favor), better housing is a necessity. There are 18 possible levels of housing in each city. Following the formula we used for "Structures", above, they are ranked below from poorest to most lavish. "Size" refers to the number of map tiles needed; "MaxPop" indicates the largest number of people who can live in a particular size of dwelling; "MaxProsp" indicates the highest level of Prosperity that can be generated by a particular type of dwelling.

Tent, Small

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 5 or 20
MAXPROSP: 5
NEEDED: Nothing

Tent, Large

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 7 or 28
MAXPROSP: 10
NEEDED: Just a basic water supply (a well)

Shack, Small

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 11 or 44
MAXPROSP: 20
NEEDED: At least one type of food from a Market

Shack, Large

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 11 or 44
MAXPROSP: 20
NEEDED: Access to a temple for at least one god

Hovel, Small

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 13 or 52
MAXPROSP: 25
NEEDED: Access to fountain

Hovel, Large

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP 15 or 60
MAXPROSP: 30
NEEDED: Access to basic entertainment (theater)

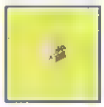
Casa, Small

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 17 or 68
MAXPROSP: 35
NEEDED: Access to basic education (School or Library)

Casa, Large

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 19 or 76
MAXPROSP: 40
NEEDED: Pottery from a Market; access to a Bath-House

Insulae, Small



SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 19 or 76
MAXPROSP: 45
NEEDED. Better entertainment (access to Amphitheater)

Insulae, Medium

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 20 or 80
MAXPROSP: 50
NEEDED: Access to Doctor's Clinic; furniture from Market

Insulae, Grand

SIZE: 1x1 or 2x2
MAXPOP: 21 or 84
MAXPROSP: 60
NEEDED: Two types of food; access to better grade of entertainment (coliseum)

Villa, Small

SIZE: 2x2 only
MAXPOP: 40
MAXPROSP: 65
NEEDED: Market access and steady supply of wine

Villa, Medium

SIZE: 2x2 only
MAXPOP: 42
MAXPROSP: 70
NEEDED: Access to hospital

Villa, Large

SIZE: 3x3 only
MAXPOP: 90
MAXPROSP: 75
NEEDED: Academy

Villa, Grand

SIZE: 3x3 only
MAXPOP: 90
MAXPROSP: 80
NEEDED: Three types of food; proximity to temples of three gods

Palace, Small

SIZE: 3x3 only
MAXPOP: 106
MAXPROSP: 85
NEEDED: Two types of wine

Palace, Medium

SIZE: 3x3 only
MAXPOP: 108
MAXPROSP: 90
NEEDED: Max entertainment (Hippodrome)

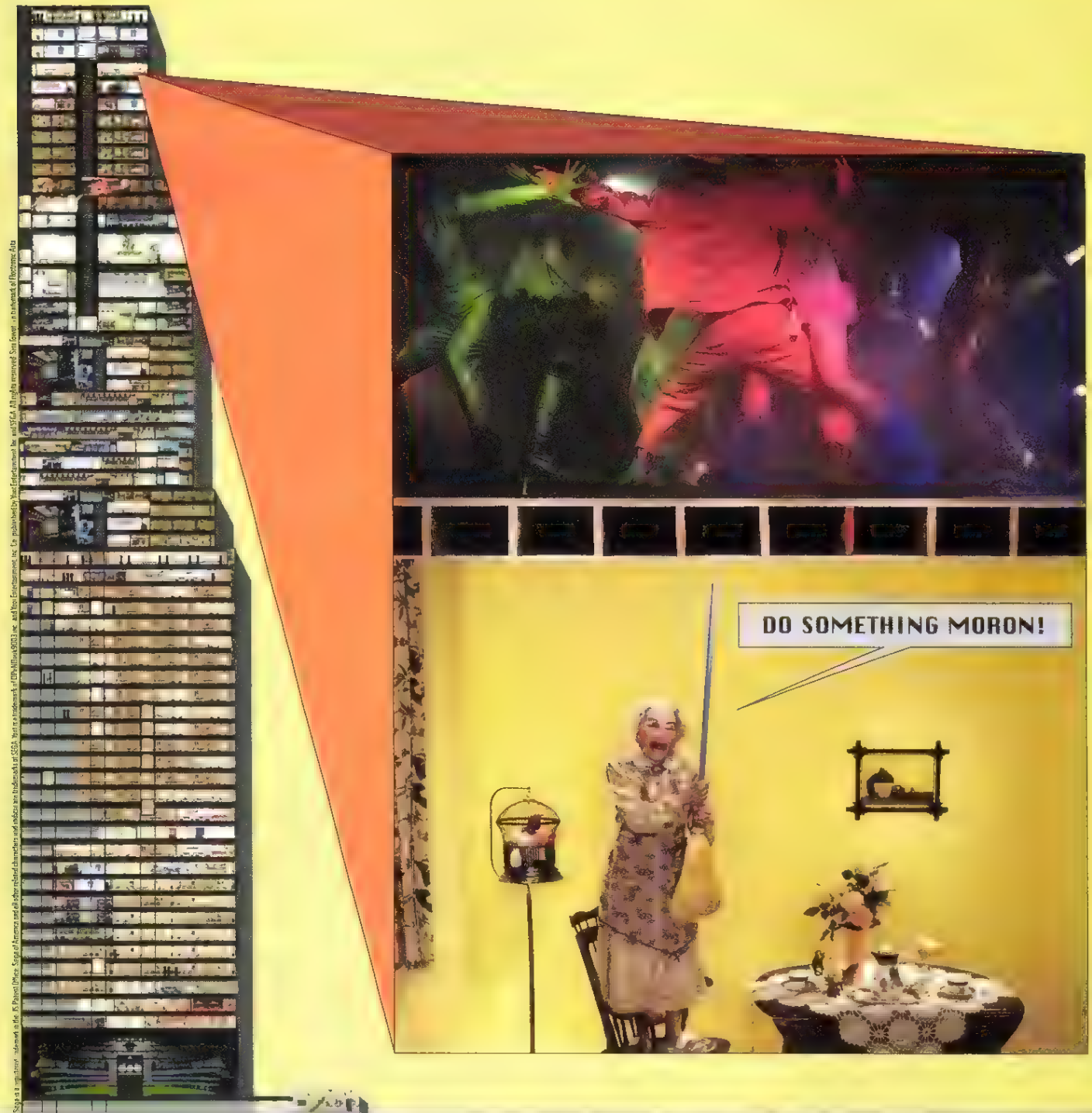
Palace, Large

SIZE: 4x4 only
MAXPOP: 200
MAXPROSP: 95
NEEDED: Patronage of all four gods; variety of foods and wines; max entertainment

Palace, Luxury

SIZE: 4x4
MAXPOP: 4x4 only
MAXPROSP: 100
NEEDED: All available services; patronage of all gods; max entertainment

EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB



Kegon Falls

SEGA

When you design and build a 50-story tower with everything from deluxe hotel rooms to juice bars to security systems, problems will arise. And some will be more challenging than others. Like massive fires. Terrorist bomb threats. And 87-year-old ladies who bought million dollar condos only to find themselves living under the hottest rave in town. From Yoot Saito, the creator of Sim Tower.

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YOOT Tower | YOU BUILD IT. YOU DEAL WITH IT.

"The best online-only game we've ever seen."
Online Gaming Review

"One of the most brilliant action games around."
Gamesdomain

"This game looks to be better than Diablo."
E3 Show Daily

TEAM UP &

"don't outrun me Sulky we got a date with the endzone"

Thorn

commando Thorn sees his chance to be a hero

"shake your boots commandos I need cover fire here"

Sulky

heading upfield ball in hand Sulky realizes she's target #1

4 games in all

multiple arenas 10 minute matches fast & fierce

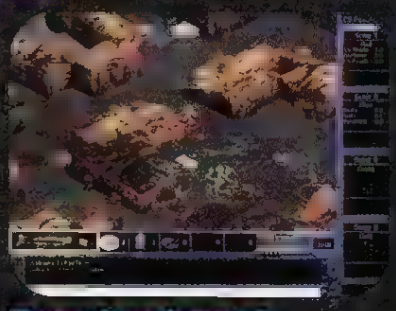
many ways to play one way to win: teamwork

Capture the Flag

the name says it: capture and hold as many flags as you can for as long as you can

BaseTag

score points by destroying enemy base stations while defending your own



Team Deathmatch

hunt the other team to rack up kills, then protect weakened teammates or you'll be overrun

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"I'll drop an auto-turret to cover our flank"

Psycho Cat

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now PsychoCat's about to draw fire

"pound it up the right side you guys I'm just about wasted"

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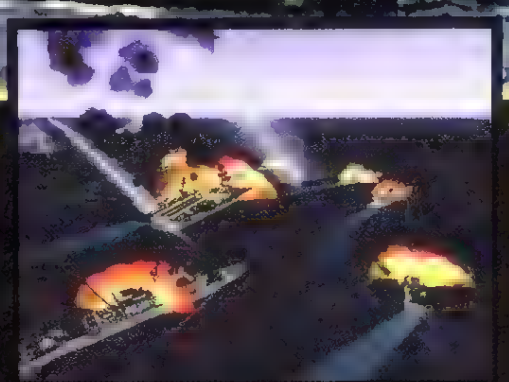
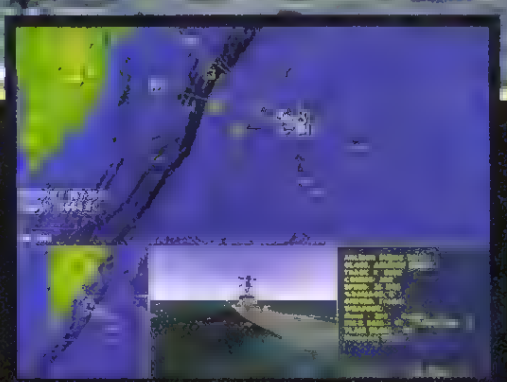


Real action. Superior 3D graphics offer intense, real-time attacks. Where the wrong move could be your last.



Real strategy. Point-and-click on strategic and tactical maps – commanding your fleet to victory.

PC Gamer -
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Grim Fandango

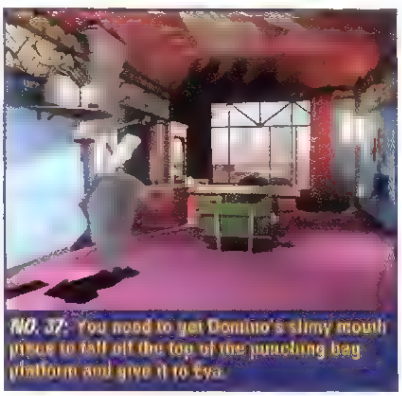
LucasArts' latest adventure can be a real head-scratcher, but you don't need to spend forever in the Land of the Dead. Just follow our easy step-by-step complete solution!

Year One

1. Check the mail tube and take the memo.
2. Take the deck of cards from the table.
3. Use the cards with the hole-punch on Eva's desk
4. Take the left elevator down to the garage.
5. Go to the back of the garage and talk to Glottis about the cars being too small to get the work order.
6. Go back up the elevator and show the work order to Eva.
7. Take the elevator across from Eva's desk to the main lobby.
8. Leave the building through the double doors at the end of the hallway.
9. Go down the stairs and make a left into the alley.
10. At the end of the alley, climb the tie-rope to the ledge.
11. Go in the open window to Don's office.
12. Use the computer terminal and change the message so that Eva is given permission to sign papers for Don.
13. Bring the work order to Eva, and she'll sign it.
14. At the restaurant, use the scythe on the object on the floor to release Bruno.
15. Return to the lobby and meet with the Tube-Switcher Guy.
16. Leave the building and visit the festival.
17. Take some bread at the first booth.
18. Talk to the Balloon Clown, making sure you get an inflated balloon animal and a couple of dead worms (empty balloons)
19. Go back to the lobby and enter the packing room to the right.
20. Fill one of the 'dead worms' with packing material from the left nozzle, and the other from the right-hand nozzle.
21. Go back up to your office.
22. Put both packing-filled balloons into the message tube.
23. Return to the lobby and head to the tube room, to the right of the double doors.
24. Take the fire extinguisher off the wall.
25. Flip the deadbolt on the metal door where the Tube-Switcher is located.
26. Leave the room and return after the Tube-Switcher Guy leaves.
27. Use the playing card that has the holes punched in it on the slot of the red tube.
28. Speak with Meche
29. Leave your office and walk toward Eva's desk.
30. Knock on the door and tell the figure at the window that you plan to prove that the Department of Death is running a crooked game.
31. Join up with Salvador and the LSA.
32. Take the freight elevator back to the alley.
33. Climb back up the rope to the ledge.
34. Go to the end of the ledge and enter the last window into Dom's office.
35. Open the desk drawer.
36. Take the coral object
37. Hit the punching bag three times and take the mouthpiece.
38. Use the coral object on the loose end of the rope you used to climb up to the ledge.
39. Throw the rope toward the ladder and then climb up to the next ledge.
40. On the roof, place the balloon in the dish.
41. Break up a loaf of bread over it.
42. After the pigeons take off, pick up the eggs.
43. Return to the alley.
44. Go to Glottis' office and use the mouthpiece with the Fil-a-Dent machine.
45. Go back to the alley and wave at the blue eye on the wall near the freight elevator.
46. Give the eggs to Sal.
47. Use the mouthpiece and put your teeth impressions in it.
48. Give the mouthpiece to Eva.
49. Walk in the direction where Glottis

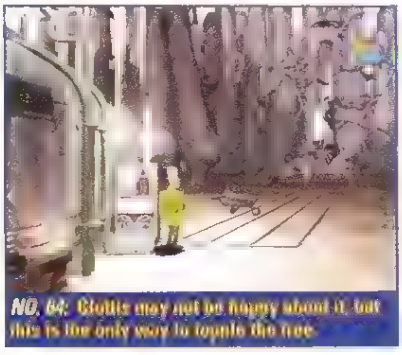
NO. 16: This rope made of ties may not look very sturdy, but it's your only access to the roof.

NO. 22: Mixing the packing materials from the two hoses should gum up the works nicely.



NO. 37: You need to get Domino's slimy mouth piece to fall off the top of the punching bag platform and give it to Eva.

threw his heart.
50. At the spider web, pick up a bone and throw it at the web.
51. Use your scythe on the web.
52. Pick up three extra bones before leaving.
53. Put the heart back in Glottis
54. Pick up the signpost that Glottis ran over.
55. Place it back in the ground.
56. Pick it up again and go in the direction that it was pointing
57. Walk to the clearing and keep placing the sign down in the direction that the arrow points. Eventually, a door in the earth will open.
58. Go back and get Glottis.
59. Go down the ramp
60. Take the brass key and hop back on the Bone Wagon
61. Take the road to the northeast
62. You must get the pumps on each side of the tree to pump at the same time. Use the wheelbarrow to roll over the lines on the ground and stop one of the pumps. Figure out the timing, and move the wheelbarrow off the line
63. Flip the switch near the trailer. Glottis will climb the tree and try to unbalance it with some rocks from the wheelbarrow.


NO. 64: Glottis may not be happy about it, but this is the only way to topple the tree.

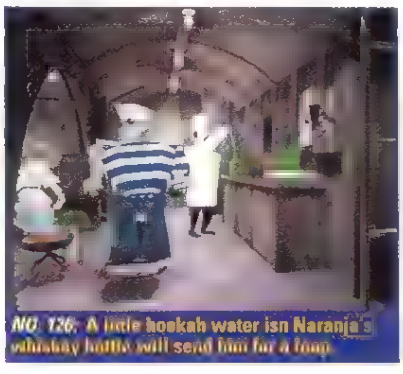
64. When you can move again, flip the switch and the tree will come down.
65. Head north to the gate. Go through the door and walk down the path on the left.
66. Throw a bone into the river
67. Immediately take out the fire extinguisher and start shooting it toward the water. When the beaver jumps off the ledge above you, he will be extinguished.
68. Repeat step 66 and 67 twice more.
69. Leave the dam area and use the brass key on the lock
70. Walk toward the fog.
71. Climb the stairs and enter the building.

NO. 107: The giant can opener is handy for removing the top of wine barrels.

72. Talk to Celso and get the picture of his wife
73. Show the picture to Velasco and get the logbook.
74. Bring the logbook back to Celso.

Year Two

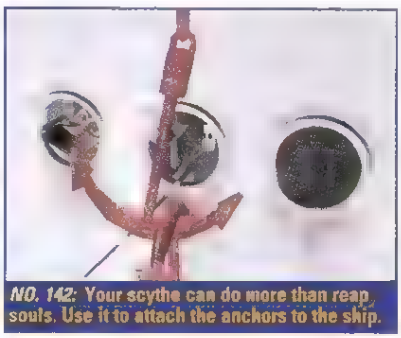
75. In your office, pick up the letters from Sal on the desk
76. Talk to Lupe, the hatcheck girl.
77. Go through the door on the left and walk down the stairs.
78. Exhaust all conversation paths with Velasco
79. Go to the Blue Casket. Go to the back of the club and chat with Olivia.
80. Walk back toward the front door and speak with the three men at the table on the right.
81. Show them the letters from Sal
82. Ask them if you can borrow the book on labor organization.
83. Exit the Blue Casket and head to the docks.
84. Give Terry the book.
85. Go back to the club.
86. Talk with Lupe.
87. Go downstairs to the bar and take the gold-flaked liqueur
88. Go into the casino and speak with Chowchilla Charlie.
89. Get the pocket-printer and the VIP pass from him.
90. Show the pass to Glottis.
91. Visit Membrillo at the Morgue and speak with him.
92. Go to the High Roller's Lounge.
93. In the kitchen, take the turkey baster.
94. When the waiter enters the pantry, close the doors.
95. Use your scythe to lock him in.
96. Leave the kitchen and talk with Nick Virago until he leaves
97. Take the cigarette case.
98. Exit the building and go up the stairs to the right.
99. Show Carla the cigarette case and tell her you found it under her desk
100. Go back up to see Carla.
101. Drink the bottle of gold-flaked liqueur.
102. Walk through the metal detector.
103. Ask about the metal detector until Carla tosses it out the window.
104. Go down to the giant kitty litter box.
105. Take the can opener
106. Go back to the kitchen in the High Roller's Lounge.
107. Use the can opener on the barrel.
108. Drive the forklift into the elevator.
109. Line up the forks with the hole on the bottom of the right side of the grate.
110. Get off the forklift
111. Hit the button on the wall.
112. Get back on the forklift
113. Drive forward while the elevator is between floors.
114. Use the forklift switch to pry open the grate.
115. Go to the end of the hall and grab the suitcase. Charlie will give you a union card.
116. Head back to the litter box.
117. Use your scythe to find the metal detector
118. Go to the lighthouse.
119. Use the key from the cigarette case.
120. Go to the Blue Casket.
121. Enter the kitchen and use the turkey baster on the sink full of hookah water
122. Go back to your club and show the plastic tile that Lola left behind to Lupe
123. Examine the jacket that she gives to you to find a slip of paper.
124. Go to Toto's Tattoo shop
125. Open the refrigerator and prop it open with the crisper drawer.
126. Use the turkey baster on Naranja's bottle.
127. Take Naranja's dog tags
128. Show Toto the slip of paper from Lola's jacket. He will give you a picture.
129. Visit Membrillo again.


NO. 126: A little hookah water isn Naranja's whiskey bottle will send him for a loop.

130. Give him the metal detector.
131. As he's trying it out, place Naranja's dog tags on the opposite body.
132. Go back to the race track
133. Use the pocket-printer to print out a ticket. The left number should be 2, the day Tuesday, and the right number 6.
134. Give the ticket to the clerk. He will give you the picture of Olivia and Nick.
135. Bring the photo to Nick in the High Roller's Lounge. He will get Terry released from jail.
136. Go to your office at the club.
137. Access the hidden panel in the desk and hit the button on the right to change the number on the roulette wheel that Captain Bogen is betting on.

Year Three

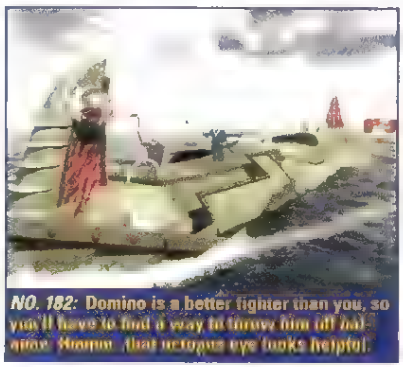
138. Walk through the door and go down the ladder.
139. Turn the ship to the left by using the starboard (right) engine.
140. Raise the starboard anchor using the button on the right wall, and then press the button again to let it drop.
141. Hit the button on the left wall to raise the port anchor.
142. Use your scythe to grab the attached anchors and hook them to the porthole.
143. Lower the starboard anchor.
144. Put the ship in full reverse by pulling both engine levers toward you.
145. Talk to Chepito and ask if you can follow him.
146. When you return to your original spot, talk with him again.
147. As he's leaving, grab him and hand him to Glottis
148. Head toward the rock to the right. Walk past the barnacles and Chepito will follow you and get trapped.



NO. 142: Your scythe can do more than reap souls. Use it to attach the anchors to the ship.

NO. 153: Use the exposed tumblers to line up the tumblers with the flat part facing right.

149. Enter the door and head straight out of the elevator. Keep going until you reach Domino's office.
150. Talk to the children until the boy throws a tiny hammer at you.
151. Pick up the hammer.
152. Head back toward Domino's office. Talk to Meche and then use the ashtray
153. Pick up the stockings that she throws in the garbage can.
154. Leave the building and head off the left side of the screen. Talk with Chepito about his drill and trading.
155. Trade him the tiny hammer for his Bust-All.
156. Trade him Meche's stockings for a gun.
157. Bring the gun back to Meche.
158. Go to the vault where Meche is trapped. Use the Bust-All on the door hinges.
159. Line up the exposed tumblers so that the flat part is toward the crack in the door (the right). Get all the tumblers spinning until the top one is positioned correctly. Spin the wheel in the opposite direction to get the third tumbler lined up and so on.
160. Use your scythe on the tumblers.
161. Turn the handle to open the vault door
162. Once inside, close the door.
163. Use your scythe on the circuit box at the top left of the door.
164. Go through the secret door and use your scythe on the overhead sprinkler.
165. Turn the valve to shut off the water.
166. Get the axe from near by the suit of armor.
167. Drag it back to where the water drained out of the room.
168. Drop the axe on the crack in the floor to reveal an exit.
169. Leave the beach and go up the ramp to the crane.
170. Drive to the other end of the track and hop off
171. Go down the conveyer belt and pull the lever at the bottom.
172. Get back on the belt and when you reach the bar, make your way down the bar to the anchor.
173. Get back on the crane and drive it to the other end of the track.
174. Lower the scoop onto the beach.
175. Use the Bust All on the scoop.
176. Drive the crane back to the other side and lower the chain.
177. Use the lever to reverse the conveyer belt and send the chain down to the ship.
178. Hit the lever again to bunch up the chain, and once again to get the chain hooked on the anchor.
179. Go back to the crane and lift the chain to pull the ship up.
180. Go back to the crane, raise the chain, and then lower it into the grinding wheels.
181. Raise the chain once again.
182. On Domino's submarine, use your scythe on the octopus eye.



NO. 182: Domino is a better fighter than you, so you'll have to find a way to throw him off his game. Hmmm...that octopus eye looks helpful.

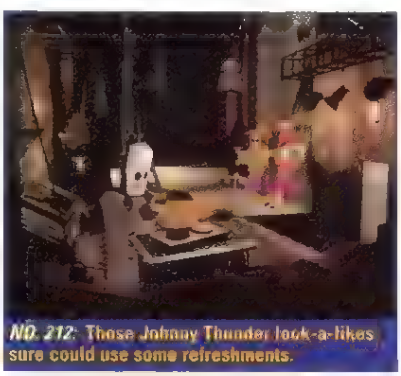
Year Four

183. At the bottom of the stairs, go left into the Mechanic's shop.
184. Go down the stairs to the kitchen.
185. Open the drawer under the mug rack to get a rag.
186. Use the rag with the oil drums outside the kitchen door.
187. Go down the large flight of stairs to the right of the shop.
188. Open the coffin to release Bruno and get a mug full of packing material.
189. Head back up the stairs.
190. After the Gatekeeper gives you the note, go back to the kitchen.
191. Hang the mug you got from Bruno on the mug rack.
192. Put the oily rag in the toaster.
193. Back in Rubacava, visit Velasco.
194. Take his ship-in-a-bottle.
195. Go to the kitchen of the Blue

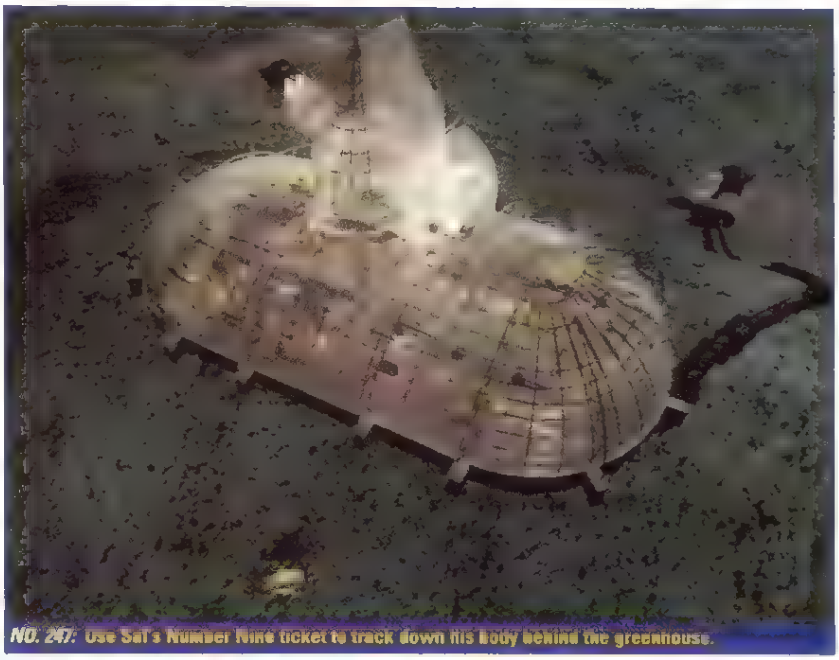
NO. 202: After Glottis fills the room with his tremendous yawn, the liquid nitrogen can be used on the floor of the garage.

Casket in it

196. Use the ship-in-a-bottle with the keg.
197. Go to Toto's.
198. Look in the wall cabinet and take the bottle of liquid nitrogen.
199. Return to the Bone Wagon.
200. Give Glottis the ship in a-bottle to drink.
201. When he returns, speak to him.
202. Use the liquid nitrogen on the floor of the garage.
203. Walk over to the bomb and defuse it.
204. Take the picture of the agent from the trash can.
205. Give the threatening note from Hector to the carrier pigeon.
206. Show the pigeon the picture of the agent.
207. Take the arm bone from the sprouted corpse
208. Leave the LSA Headquarters and get the Bone Wagon remote control from Glottis.
209. Go up the ladder.
210. At the end of the hall, go up the ladder
211. Go down the stairs to the makeup room.
212. Pick up the coffeepot and climb the ladder to the catwalk.
213. Pour the coffee on the Johnny Thunder look-a-likes
214. Climb back down and replace the coffeepot on the burner.



NO. 212: Those Johnny Thunder look-a-likes sure could use some refreshments.



NO. 247: Use Sal's Number Nine ticket to track down his body behind the greenhouse.

NO. 231: While Charlie is otherwise occupied, have the agent rig his machine to pay off.

215. Climb back to the catwalk.
216. Put the severed arm in the grinder and take it.
217. Go back to the makeup room.
218. Go back to Glottis and the Bone Wagon.
219. Use the grinder with the severed arm on the sproutella puddle
220. Keep using the grinder and follow the trail to the secret tunnel.
221. Use the remote control to get up to the catwalk.
222. Walk to the end and the crocodile will turn around
223. Use the remote control to trap the crocodile under the Bone Wagon.
224. At the Florist shop, use your scythe to take the tape off of the bell on the door
225. Leave and re-enter the shop
226. Go up the ladder and enter the doorway marked "Casino".
227. Talk to the Tube-Switcher Guy.
228. Go over to the slot machines
229. Speak to the agent wearing the trench coat.
230. Talk with Meche.
231. Put the sheet over Chowchil a Charlie's head.
232. Talk to the agent.
233. Go into the bathroom to get the new suit.
234. Speak to the Tube-Switcher Guy again.
235. To answer his question, give him the last number to appear on the Keno board.
236. Talk to Celso.
237. Tell him about your worst vacation ever.
238. At the gargoyle fixture with the crack, use the grinder to put some bone chips in the crack.
239. Use the sproutella on the bone chips.
240. Climb up the ladder to get to the other rooftop.
241. Go up to the greenhouse and go in.
242. Use the liquid nitrogen on yourself.
243. Go back to the car and talk with Sal's head.
244. Open the suitcase
245. Take the ticket from Sal's head.
246. Take the ticket to the back of the greenhouse.
247. When you find Sal's body, search it to get the key to the trunk
248. Go back to the car and use the key on the trunk.
249. Use the gun on the water tower.
250. Go back to the greenhouse and open the door. You win!

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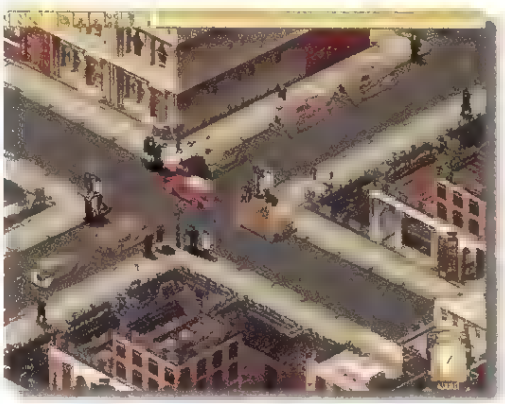

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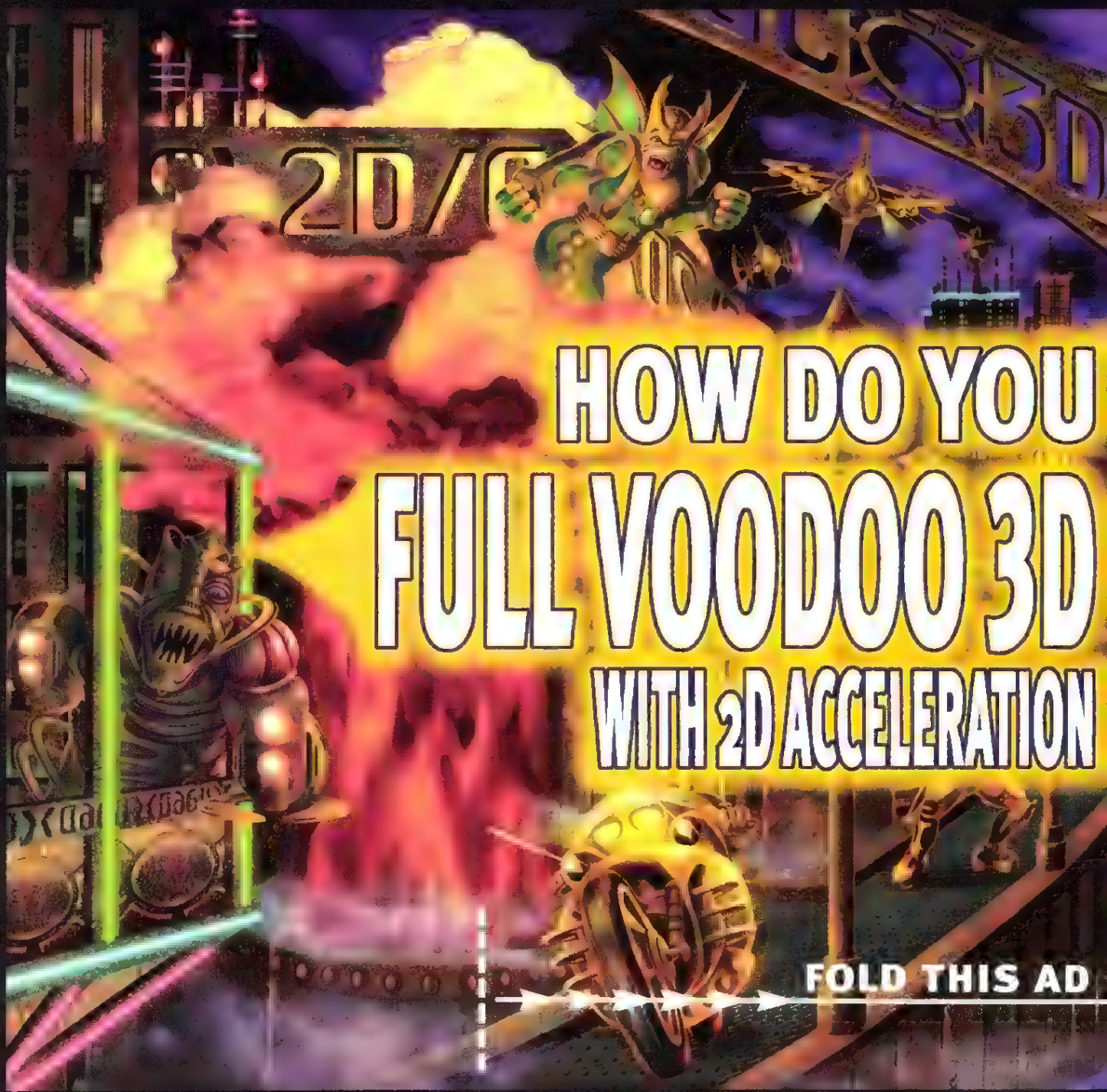

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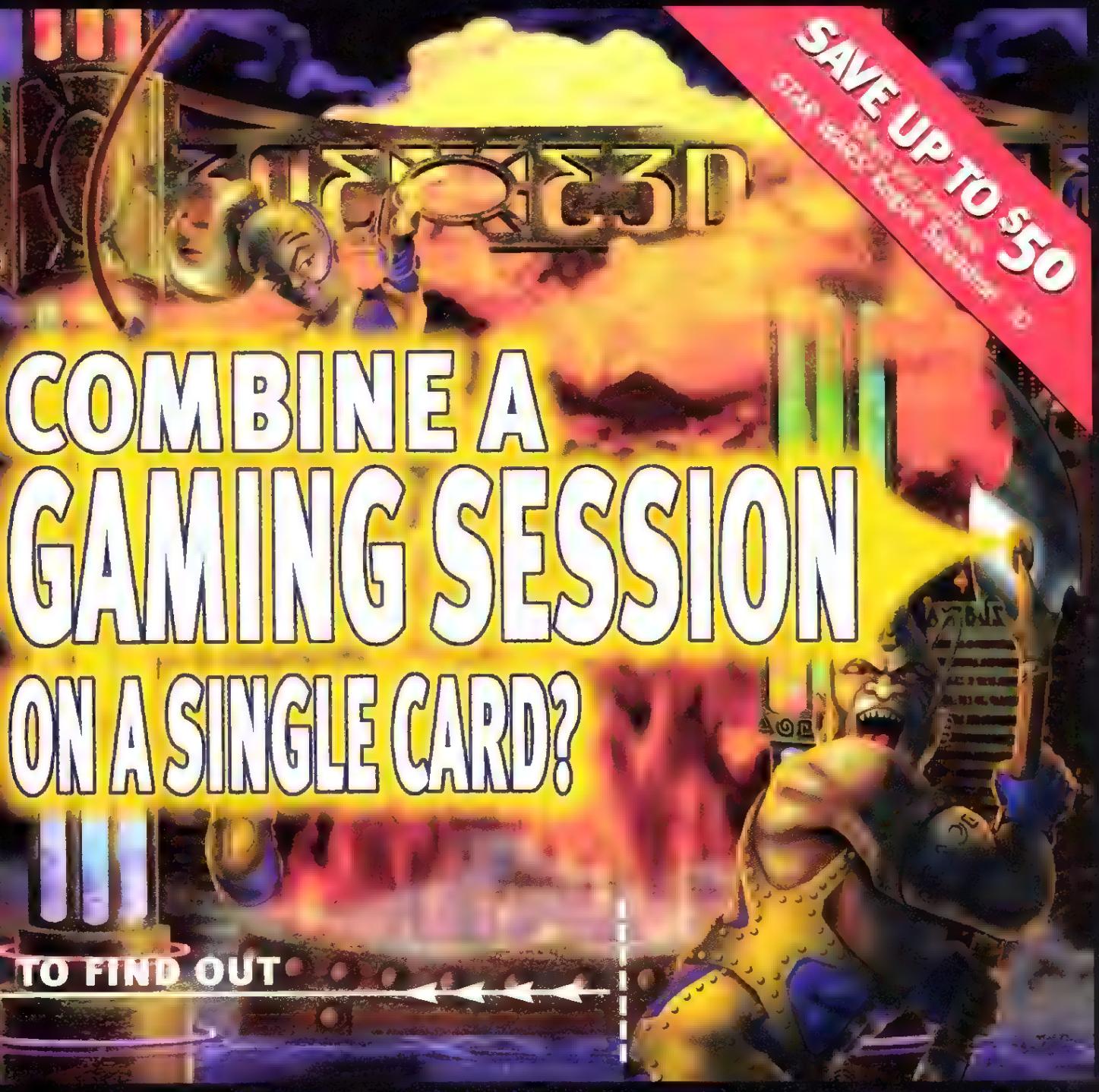

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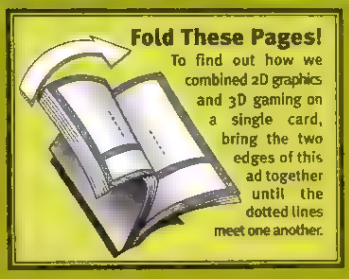

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Having a little trouble restoring law and order to Freeport City? Our complete guide to the 12 toughest missions will help lead you to victory.

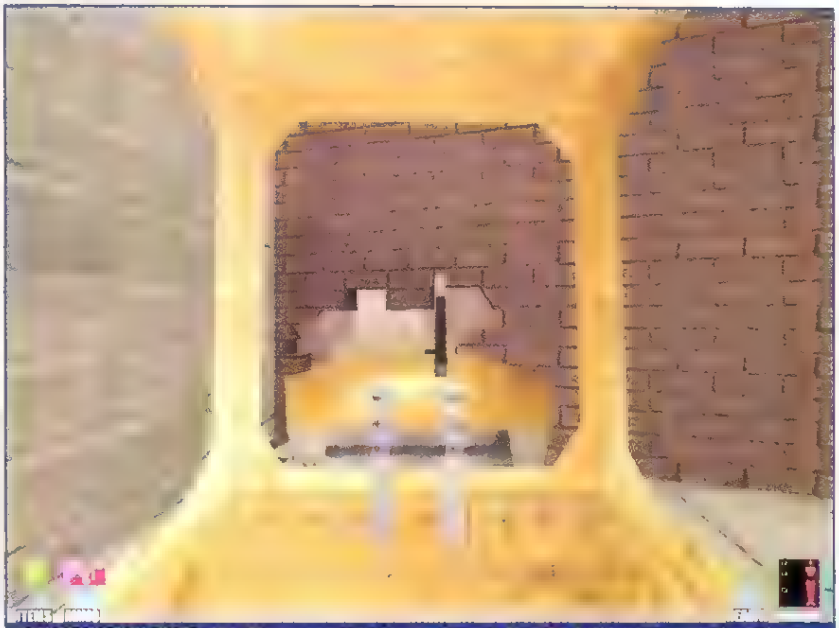
Get the 1.01 Patch!

Before you even think about playing Sin, make sure you have the most recent patch. Version 1.01 can be found on this month's CD or on the Internet at our FTP server: *ftp.pcgamer.com/patches/sin1_01.zip*. The patch speeds up those long level load times and fixes several other bugs that should make life with *Sin* much more pleasant. Visit *www.ritual.com* for the most up-to date patch information.

Freeport City Bank

There are two different locations you can start from (depending on how well you did in the opening level) – the rooftop of the bank or on the street outside. If you didn't enter from the roof, then replay the first level and make sure you take out all of the gun turrets. Now with the ATM machines to your right, move forward and around the corner. When you get to the escalators, go up to the second floor and through the double doors beside the bank map sign. Keep going until you get to a nicely furnished room with a key sitting on the corner of a desk. Pick up the key and continue through the bank until you get to the vault door. Mancini will bark out some silly order to his henchmen about killing you and then run away. Whatever you do, do not rush in after him — the ceiling mounted gun turrets will cut you to ribbons. Instead, go through the door to your left and find a computer terminal (it's in one of the upstairs rooms). Use the computer to set vault security to LOW and retrieve the combination. The gun turrets won't shoot at you now, so go to the vault door and use the combination to open them. Climb down the ladder in the nearby room, and you'll be on your way to the next level.

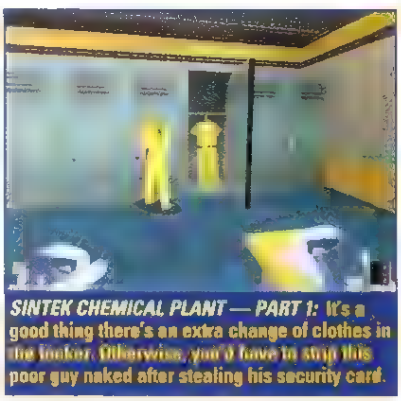
FREEPORT CITY BANK: To get to the computer terminal that controls all of the bank's security functions, you'll need to first shoot out this window and jump through it.



CONSTRUCTION ZONE: Ahh. Heavy construction equipment. Use the bulldozer to punch a hole in this wall and give yourself a lesser known exit from this level.

Construction Zone

Climb on the dumpsters and ladders until you're on the roof of a tall building. Make a death-defying leap to the rooftop across from you. You can blow up the air conditioning unit on this rooftop to gain entrance to a secret area. When you're finished rooting around in the secret room, go back to the roof and get to the area overlooking the construction area. Jump to the girders and then to the ground. Pick up the key from inside the trailer and then go up to the fenced area and blow up the barrels. Crawl through the hole in the wall and shoot your way through the next series of rooms. When you get back outside, look up and shoot the hanging girder. It will fall down, causing the area to flood with water. Swim to the pipe on the opposite end and navigate your way through it. When you emerge on the other side, move quickly, or you will be crushed by a falling cement slab. Climb out of the pit and take control of the bulldozer. Plow through the wall ahead of you and get out. After storming through several rooms, you'll come to a wall with a large hole in it. That's your exit.



SINTEK CHEMICAL PLANT — PART 1: It's a good thing there's an extra change of clothes in the locker. Otherwise, you'd have to strip this poor guy naked after stealing his security card.

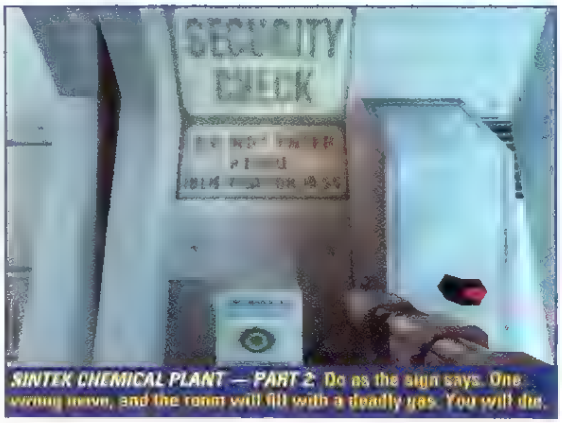
SinTek Chemical Plant — Part 1

Your fists are the only weapon you'll need here, so put away your guns. When you enter the plant, make sure you punch out the receptionist before she has a chance to sound the alarm. She's cute and all, but underneath that pretty face and nurse's uniform, she's a seething cauldron of hate who won't think twice about calling in her guard boyfriends to put a hurt on

you. Go through the double doors on the other side of the room and crouch beneath the windows so the lab workers don't see you. After the first set of windows, turn left. At the elevator, turn left again. Go past the next window and turn left one more time. Take the first door on your left to get into the locker room. Take the uniform hanging in one of the lockers. This will help you out in the next level. You'll also meet a technician in the locker room. Punch him out and take his security pass. Now sneak back out into the hallways and retrace your steps back to the elevator. Get in it and ride it down to the lower level of the chemical plant.

SinTek Chemical Plant — Part 2

Smash the air duct cover on the wall in the control room near the start area. Use the computer console to start the fan test sequence and quickly crawl into the air duct. After the duct slopes upward, take the first left. Hop into the next room and down past the fan (which should be stopped now). Go past two more fans and into a large room. Go through the door beside the alarm switch and keep mowing down baddies until J.C. tells you something about a scientist having an ID card you need. (Note Lab 2 as you pass by since you'll need to return there to finish the level.) Retrace your steps back to the large room you just came from. Shoot the scientist and take his ID card. Go through the door beside the glass enclosed chamber and use the ID card to get past the lasers. Walk across the catwalk and keep going until you reach Lab 6. Once inside Lab 6, activate the computer terminal using the password "wellofsouls". Open up the U4 storage and go grab a vial. Now go all the way back to Lab 2 and place the U4 in the Bioscanner and use the adjacent computer terminal to start the scan. Exit out to the catwalk area and jump down to the pipe with the air duct cover beside it. Smash the cover and crawl through the pipes until you reach the exit.



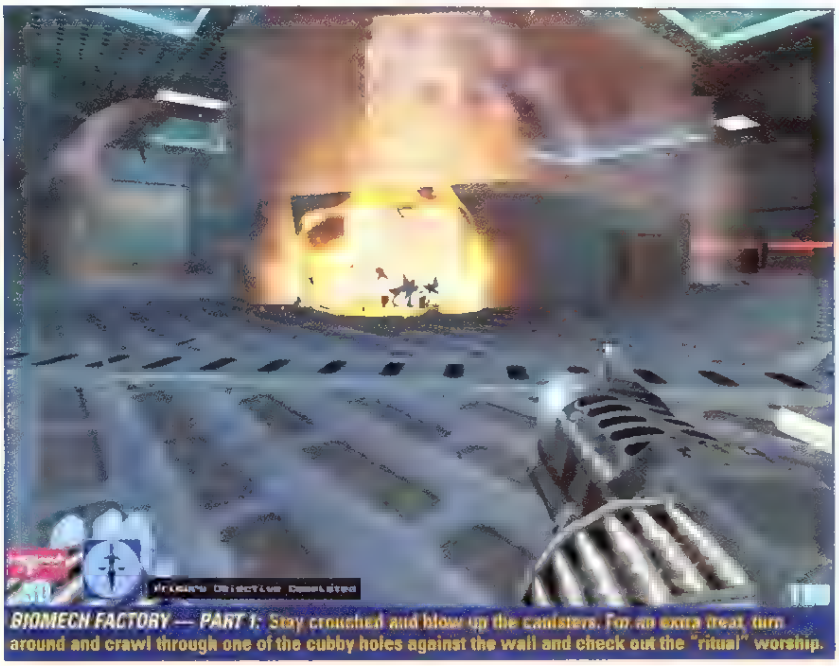
SINTEK CHEMICAL PLANT — PART 2: Do as the sign says. One wrong move, and the room will fill with a deadly gas. You will die.

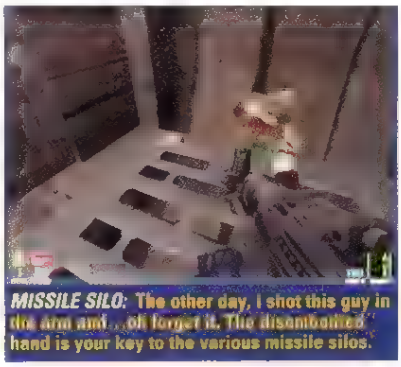
Biomech Factory — Part 1

Move through the tunnels until you get to the Securaton trap. Crawl through the air duct passage and emerge into the adjoining hallway. Walk up the winding staircase and through the door at the top. Stop! This area is guarded by a security grid, so you'll have to crouch in this room to avoid setting it off. Shoot out the canisters in front of the machine area and go through the door on the other side of the room. After the next set of hallways, you'll reach a circular room with the SinTek logo on the floor. Go into the air duct on the right side of this room and keep crawling until you drop down into the next set of halls. Keep fighting your way through until you reach the security area. Get the security pass from the technician and unlock the security doors. Go through the door opposite the security desk and you should find the exit after a few more twists and turns.

Missile Silo

Kill all of the guards and pick up the security pass to enter the main silo structure. Take the elevator down to the lower levels and run through the tubes until you get to the dual power generators. Note the security door you pass on the way. When you get to the catwalk above the power generators, climb down the ladders and blow them both up. It'll go pitch black until the backup generators come online and emergency lights activate. Go back and open the security door you passed earlier and hang a left. Climb down the ladder and smash the crates. Crouch down to open the grate the climb down the ladder to the next room. Talk to the head marine and get the passcode you'll need to lock down the war-


BIOMECH FACTORY — PART 1: Stay crouched and blow up the canisters. For an extra treat, turn around and crawl through one of the cubby holes against the wall and check out the "ritual" worship.


MISSILE SILO: The other day, I shot this guy in the arm and... oh forget it. The disembodied hand is your key to the various missile silos.

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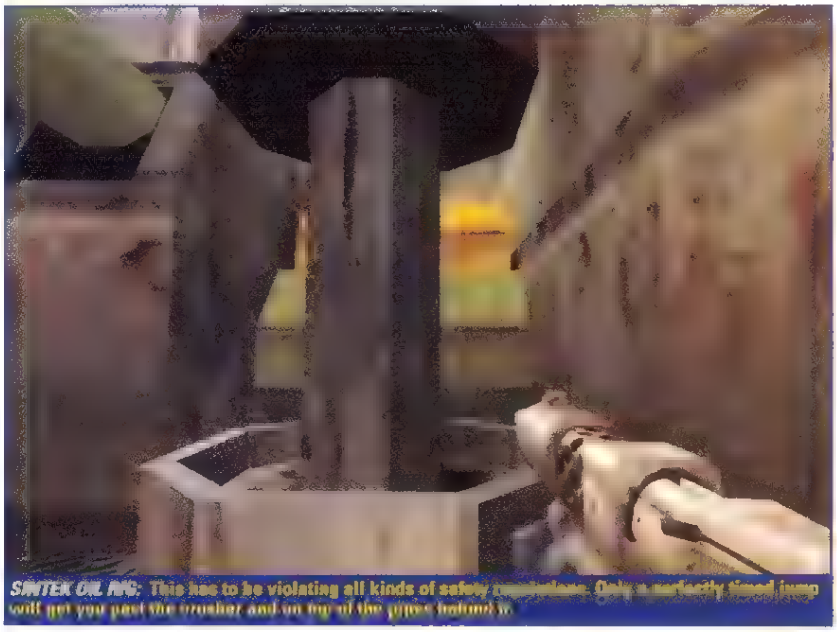


SINTEK OIL RIG: This has to be violating all kinds of safety regulations. Only a perfectly timed jump will get you past the crusher and on top of the pipes behind it.

heads SinTek is trying to steal. Go back the way you came in past the security door and take a left into the tunnel marked "Flooded Area". Dive into the water and swim straight, taking only right turns when you're given a choice. Use the ladders to climb out of the water and on to the catwalk above. Go to the door without a number on it and pick up the hand laying beside the hand less dead guy. Go to silo #1 and jump down to the control room. Lock down warhead #2 and open silo #2. Run to silo #2 and lock the warhead down again. Open silo #3 and run like the wind to it. Once you enter silo #3, you're on a timer, so act fast! Abort the launch sequence and use "lithium707" as the passcode. Once you've done this, the level is over.

SinTek Oil Rig

Use your sniper rifle to pick off the workers on the lower level of the rig. Then climb the ladder to get on the rig itself. Go in through the door on the lower level and keep going across the catwalks and up the ladders until you reach a fenced area you can't enter. Beside you should be a large crusher moving up and down. Carefully jump past the crusher and get on top of the fan unit. Walk across the green pipe and jump down into the fenced area. Go through a couple more doors until you're outside. Turn right and go past the crates until you reach the edge of the rig. Go through the door to the left. Use the elevator in the next room to get to the upper level of the rig. Keep clearing out the rooms until you get outside again. Look to your left, and you'll see another door right beside the one you just came out of. In case you were wondering, that's your exit.

Underwater Passage — Part 1

In the first room, use the computer terminal to open the Cargo Bay Door and set the Cargo System Controls to "Ship Waiting Cargo". Find the opposing doors at the other end of the room and go through the left one. When you get to the computer terminal, use it to disable both circulation ports. Go back to the starting area and dive into the water. Follow the little submarine on its path. Use the air bubbles to keep from drowning. When the submarine reaches the force field protected door, swim to the left and through the series of doors until you emerge into a room stocked with ammo and other helpful items. Grab the green key card and go through the door to the left of the decompression chamber. When you get to the next computer terminal, use it to disable Main Sub Door Security. The force field protected door you passed earlier should now be inactive. Swim back to it and go though. Keep swimming through the tunnels until you reach the exit.

Underwater Passage — Part 2

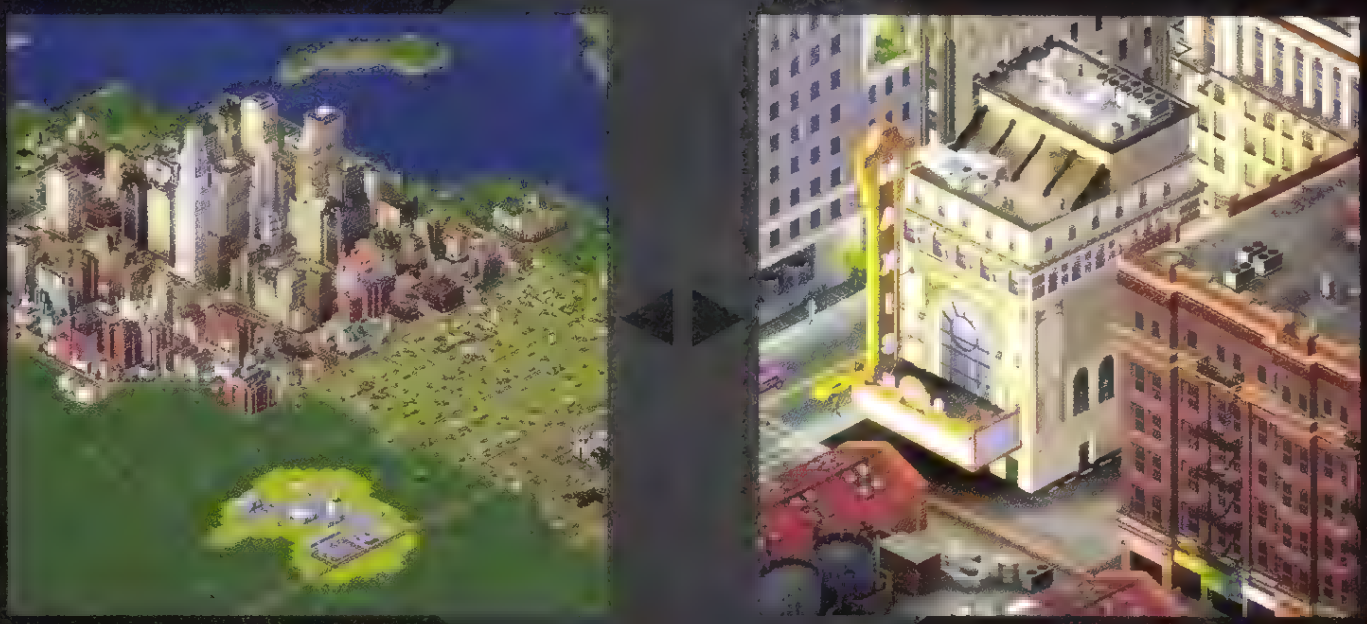
Swim to the top of the rock formation and look for the opening of a small tunnel. Swim into the tunnel, and the current should push you through into the next area. Swim down and between a couple of rocks that just fell down. Ride the current into the next area. Swim back up to the top and hug the left canyon wall. Go past the falling rock and go through the opening to your left. Swim high and then down through the tunnel. Swim toward the lights and then downward. Take the tunnel to the right and hug the wall until you get to another fairly open area. The little yellow submarine will appear and lead you to the end of the level.

Hidden Docks — Part 1

Follow the submarine through the first two doors. Heed J.C.'s advice and don't go through the third door. Turn to your right and go through the watertight door. Just around the bend is another watertight door. Go

UNDERWATER PASSAGE — PART 2: It's easy to get lost in the underwater caverns. Keep your eyes open for small openings like this.

UNDERWATER PASSAGE — PART 1: When you've got the shipping system working properly, play the game of "follow the yellow sub." Stay close to it, or the doors will shut before you can get through.



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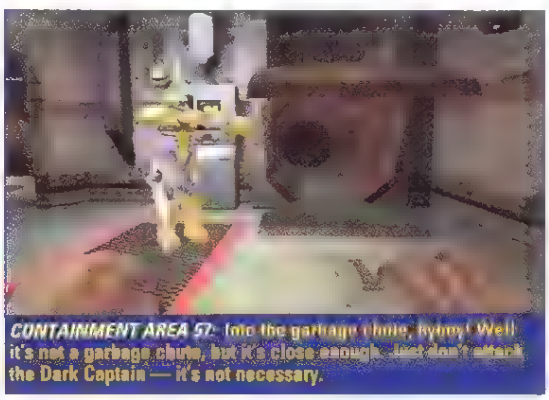
HIDDEN DOCKS — PART 1: Look at me, I'm Will Ferrell from Saturday Night Live! Or maybe not. Pick up the blue keycard and swim back to the other side of the level.

through that one, too, and swim directly up. Look around you and climb the ladder onto the platform. Climb another ladder in this area and pick up the yellow keycard laying on the computer terminal. Jump back into the water and swim all the way back through the two airtight doors to the area of the third submarine door. Notice the ladder extending into the water and climb up it. The gun turrets will start up, so run quickly to your left and through the open security door. Use the computer terminal to deactivate the gun turret and go through the next security door. Grab the blue keycard. Jump back into the water and swim down. Go through the passageway to the left. Keep going left and you'll see another watertight door. Don't go through this door. Swim directly up to the surface, and you see yet another watertight door. Go through this door and take the elevator to the Geothermal Plant. The Geothermal Plant is not on the critical path, so you can completely skip it, but you'll miss blowing up some really cool stuff. To get to the next required level, swim all the way back to the area where you first picked up the yellow security card. The security door here should now be open, so head on through it.

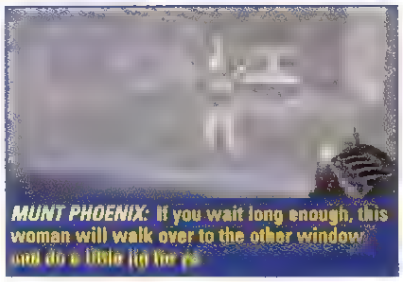


CONTAINMENT AREA 57: Into the garbage chute, hmm? Well it's not a garbage chute, but it's close enough. Just don't attack the Dark Captain — it's not necessary.

MUNT PHOENIX: Hmm. Now what could this be for? You can climb down into the holding area if you're so inclined, but it's not necessary to complete the level.

Containment Area 57

Walk out of your cell but don't attack the Dark Captains. Instead, peacefully walk down the passageway lined with red stripes until you reach Darwin Chamber #1. Go into the chamber and take care of the Manumit in the maze. Find the lift and take it back up to the main cellblock. Follow the walkway to the second Darwin Chamber and go through. This time you'll have to complete a rather frustrating jumping puzzle. (If you find that you're continually failing this series of trick jumps, then just use the "noclip" cheat to fly to the destination ledge. Cheating may be for wusses, but it can be justified in this case if it will save you from pulling out your hair in frustration.) After you're finished with the jumping puzzle, follow the walkway to Darwin Chamber #3. Do as the Dark Captain asks and walk on into it. You will be dumped into a series of underwater passageways. Find your way out and go through the reddish door after the bend in the hallway. Use the conversion chamber to change back to a human. Go back to the area where you got out of the water and load up on guns and ammo. Now go back to the conversion chamber and through the door with the skull and crossbones sign above it. The Xenomorphic Laboratories are next. Have fun.

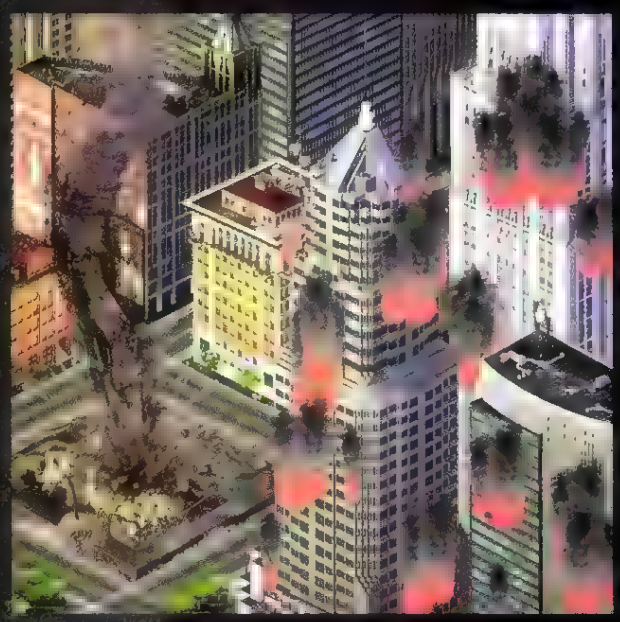


MUNT PHOENIX: If you wait long enough, this woman will walk over to the other window and do a little jig for ya.

Munt Phoenix

This is the last level before you meet the end boss. When you get out of the elevator go to the door to the right and take the stairs up to the Observation Dome. A large Manumit will break through the wall. When you've dispatched with the opposition, pick up the green keycard from one of the Sergeants outside. You'll notice a rocket rise from the floor of the observation deck and move into position for launch. Don't concern yourself with that right now. Use the green keycard to get into the Main Office on the other side of the Observation Dome. Pick up the yellow keycard. Use the stairs and climb up to the Balcony. When you enter the balcony, Elexis will finish up her speech on world domination and run away. Go back down the stairwell to the Control Room on the first floor. Walk around the glass to try and get inside the same room as Elexis and fall down the trap. It's time to face the end boss!

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 160



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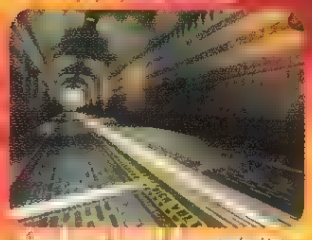

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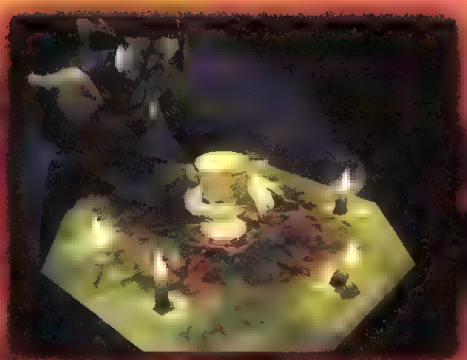

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Railroad Tycoon II

This sequel is every bit as challenging as Sid Meier's original, so we got the game's creators, PopTop Software, to give us some hints to get you on the right track (ouch).

Getting Started

There is a lot of money to be made in the *Railroad Tycoon II* world, but some ways to make it are easier than others. When you are still new to the game, stick to moving passengers from one city to another. This avoids the need to move goods to the correct industry. After you get a good run or two based on passenger revenue, begin to move resources. The best way to make money on these is to start in the countryside. Work on creating the Food and Goods for hauling to the cities. Only spend what money you need to get the routes laid in at first, and improve them (by buying station improvements, upgrading to double track, and adding additional trains) when you can afford to. Do not be afraid to take out a bond (maybe two), but no more, and only to build an initial track. Do not take out bonds immediately if it is only to "get more money."

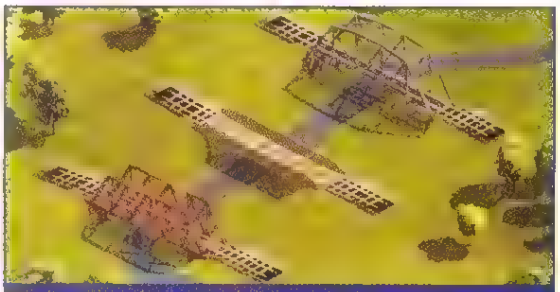
This is an ideal way to start — two good sized cities, close together, allowing a profitable passengers and mail run.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is composed of two parts: stations and track. These are the "non-moving parts" of your empire, providing the link between your trains and the resources.

Stations come in three sizes, each with a different area of resource access and a corresponding price range. For the most part, a station needs to provide access to at least two buildings in order to be profitable. If this means placing a large station in the countryside, so be it. The more buildings within a station's access radius, the better. All stations can be improved with a set of structures. These range from sanding towers for your trains to saloons that bring in money on passenger cars. While there is a large range of buildings to choose from, only some of the buildings will be worth purchasing at any one station. A warehouse will only help at stations in which you pick up wool, cotton, or goods. Roundhouses are only needed at about a third of your stations (because trains only need to be serviced every two to four years). Heavy passenger stations may call for a hotel and a restaurant, two structures that will not help at a logging camp.

You want your trains to get from station to station as fast as possible. Period. This is the key to successful track laying. The computer automatically calculates the shortest route, *not* the fastest (or cheapest). Keep grades low by running your track around hills and ravines by laying small sections at a time — a train that runs twice as far in order to avoid a steep grade will often still arrive more quickly. The computer also does not take traffic into account, leaving that task entirely up to you. Learn to lay routes that can accommodate the maximum number of trains by providing alternate track for bypassing stations, using double track, and setting up circuits that keep trains going out in different directions from the one they came in at. If traffic still builds up, don't be afraid to lay down a new station beside the old one, with different track leading in and out. Then divide the trains between the two.

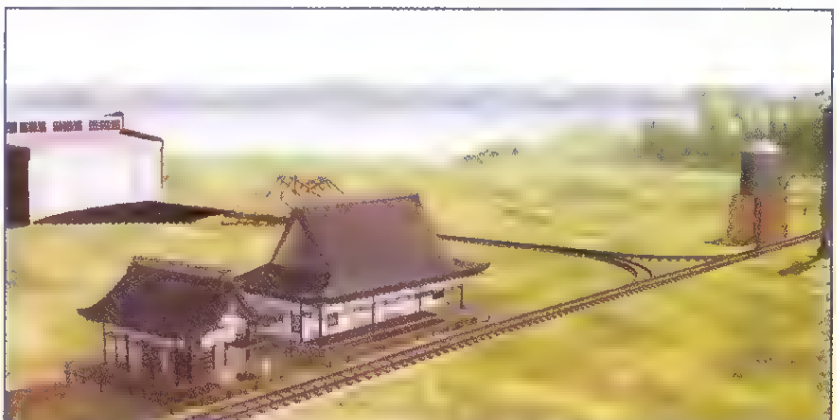


There are three types of bridges, each with its own price range and characteristics. In order to help save money, use the inexpensive wooden ones on all but the busiest routes.

Trains

While there are no absolute "best" trains, certain engines do tend to be better in a lot of situations. In the early years, the Iron Duke 4-2-2 is a favorite, and for good reason. It becomes available early, in 1855, and arguably remains the best all-around engine until the 1895 emergence of the Mogul 2-6-0. The Iron Duke is fast for the time period and has great pulling power. Its only serious drawbacks are its lack of dependability and high costs, but the faster speed can easily make enough revenue to cover the costs, replace the occasional Iron Duke crash, and still earn a nice profit.

By the time diesels hit the scene, engine considerations have changed. In the days of early steam, engines should only be used to haul two or three cars. The good diesels, though, need to haul four to six in order to turn a good profit. And by then, engine prices have climbed high enough to inhibit reckless replacement of crashed trains. This



A depot from the inside: Setup up refilling depots by building a small station with only a water tower, sanding tower, and the occasional roundhouse. Remember: Your trains don't have to stop at the station — they only have to pass through it to reap the servicing benefits.

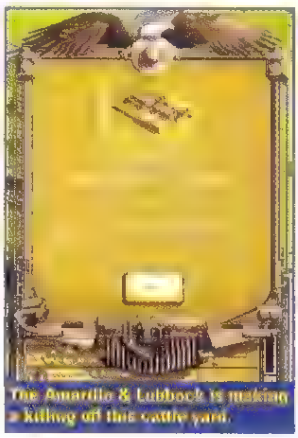
Look for passes through the mountains. It's much easier to go around the Swiss Alps than through them.

means that dependability is a more important factor. One of the best diesels available will be the GP18. It has decent speed and good pulling power, and has excellent mountain performance. At about half the cost, the V200 can keep up with the GP18 on a flat run, but it slows down quickly on any grade and is very unreliable. Conversely, the Class 55 Deltic, twice as expensive as the GP18, goes much faster on a flat run and is just as reliable. But like the V200, it slows down quickly and drops below the speed of the GP18 on as little as a 1 percent grade. And with a $480,000 price tag, the Deltic is painfully expensive to replace.

Players entering the electric engine arena will find the reasonably priced GG1 as a hands down favorite. It can single handedly justify the expensive upgrade to electric track. It's the only engine in the game to earn an Outstanding rating, and it is one of the first electrics available, introduced in 1933. The only electric engines faster than the GG1 are the Shinkansen bullet train in 1966, the highly unreliable Thalys in 1994, and the 2008 Maglev. But at prices at $680,000, $1M, and $2.5M respectively, these three trains are difficult to afford and worse to replace after an accident.

The Stock Market

The stock market in *Railroad Tycoon II* behaves the same as in real life, so expect to use the same behavior when dealing with it. The old motto of "buy low, sell high" definitely applies here. Early on, buy more of your own stock to solidify your control. Keep an eye on the computer player's railroads and invest in those with a promising future. Don't just look at a company's current profitability, look at its potential. A railroad may get off to a fast, profitable start connecting two big cities, but if there's nothing else nearby to connect to, the railroad is unlikely to grow. Conversely, a railroad building in the midwest U.S. may not strike it rich early, but the large number of medium-sized cities will allow plenty of growth.


The Amarillo & Lubbock is making a killing off this cattle yard.

To translate paper wealth into cold hard cash, go ahead and raise your company's dividend so it pays you a nice annual amount (only do this if you're a significant shareholder). Sell off stocks as they peak during market booms, and buy aggressively during the occasional economic downturn, as prices bottom out.

When you're ready, you can greatly increase your returns through margin buying. Margin buying means that you are using your current stock holdings as collateral with which to purchase more stock. If your current holdings decrease in value, you might have to sell margin-bought stock in order to cover your loan. One particularly nasty side-effect of this enforced selling is the "margin spiral of death." If you have invested everything in one stock, and used margin heavily, a slight downturn can trigger a margin call, forcing you to sell some of your stock. Unfortunately, the sale of a portion of your one and only stock causes its price to fall, reducing the collateral value of the rest of your stock, and forcing you to sell even more, sometimes leading to a complete wipeout. To avoid this, use margin carefully, and spread your investments out among several companies.

Industries

Passengers are often the most profitable industry. Some scenarios, in fact, can be won without ever worrying about other industries. Usually, though, at least partial use of other industries will improve income, and in some scenarios (especially those set in modern times), passengers simply won't make much money.

With other industries, there is a chain (or "industry vector") that can be created. For example, grain can be used to increase wool production, and then the wool can be taken to a textile mill. The Goods produced at the textile mill can then be taken to a port. The most money is made by following the entire path. This is simply because, while the resources lower on the chain are required to make the final products, those final products yield the most money per load. Cities pay a lot more for food and goods than cattle farms will pay for grain. But shipping that grain results in an increase in the lucrative goods. Following a path also means that a train can make profit on each leg of the route as it ships each product farther along the vector, resulting in high efficiency.

Look for routes that can be turned into a cycle. For example, after making the goods mentioned above, take those goods to a city that has a chemical plant. Take those chemicals to a fertilizer plant, and then take the resulting fertilizer back to the grain farm. The amount of grain you receive

s enhanced, and revenue is brought n at every station.

Following an industry chain also means that you can purchase every building used along that chain, resulting in more income from industry investments.

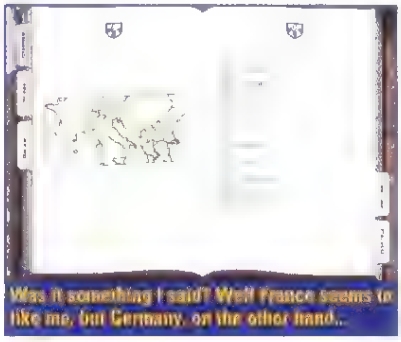
After passengers, look toward cattle, textiles, and steel as particularly lucrative chains. This is especially true of steel, which is in high demand from a lot of different places. Steel can be shipped to tool and die factories, canneries, and auto plants.

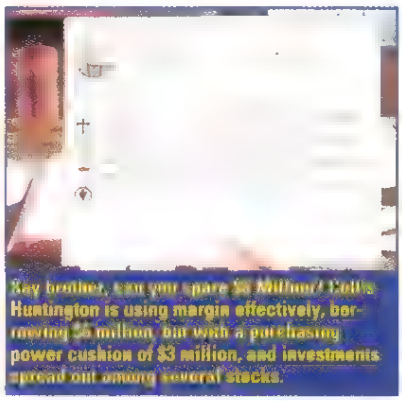
More money is paid for resources shipped from farther away. Unfortunately, fuel and infrastructure costs can be high for long hauls. Together, these two sentences add up to one thing: medium-length runs pay the most. Short runs make little money, and the industries do not have time to produce more goods, but long runs can be very costly, so shipping cargo a long but not excessive distance will make the most money. This distance will change depending on the engine, time period, and cargo type, but always keep the rule in mind.

Territories and Goodwill

The map will usually be divided into multiple territories, each with its own level of goodwill with you. Since access costs vary depending on your political standing with a territory, raising your overall goodwill will result in lower access costs. Outside of the occasional event, goodwill is determined by your performance as a railroad company. Keep your trains reliable and safe and your stations empty, and you should have high goodwill. There is little reason the goodwill map shouldn't be glowing green with happiness by the end of your game.

Surplus goods at a station decrease your goodwill. People like to know they can depend on you to ship their goods. If you are attempting to improve goodwill, don't put a station in a location that will produce more cargo than you can ship away, or near industries that will produce cargo you do not plan on shipping. Keep reliability high by placing roundhouses in lots of stations. This will keep your trains running better, which is good, because every breakdown will hurt your political standing. A crash is even worse. If you are after goodwill, stick to more reliable trains, even if it results in slower shipping times. As you might guess, each robbery also hurts your standing. Place a caboose on trains that are not fully loaded to improve its safety. The caboose also improves reliability, so it is especially helpful. In fact, one of the best ways to raise your goodwill dramatically and quickly is to place a caboose on almost every train for almost its entire route


Was it something I said? Well France seems to like me, but Germany, on the other hand...


Say brother, can you spare $3 Million? Collis Huntington is using margin effectively, borrowing $5 million, but with a purchasing power cushion of $3 million, and investments spread out among several stocks.

London is a great place to start your British railroad empire.

Campaign Tips

The campaign has 18 different scenarios. All present tough challenges, but numbers five, seven, and twelve seem to be the trickiest. Here's an insider's guide to getting the gold on these three scenarios.

CAMPAIGN SCENARIO FIVE.
WHISTLE STOPS AND PROMISES

Your mission is to move Roosevelt from city to city in an attempt to garner votes in the upcoming election. You start with one train and cannot purchase more. Time moves in days and hours instead of months and years, and you only have 14 days available to you. While it may seem impossible at first, the Gold victory is very attainable even on the Hard setting. This is how:

There are three train choices available. Only one of them, the Camelback 2-6-0, can supply the gold win on Hard. Its good mountain performance and good hauling availability even with six cars attached give it an edge over the others. Likewise, only one known route will allow the Camelback to stop at 16 stations within the time limit. Start at Cheyenne, then head westward toward Rock Springs. Follow this track northwest through Pocatello, Twin Falls, and Boise. You'll need to refill oil, sand, and water, so head up to Pasco. Then turn around and head farther west to the split near the coast. There is a hill at the start of the southern fork, so you'll head north first in order to gain speed on the way back down. This will let you climb that hill more easily. But don't stop at Tacoma yet — head all the way up the mountainside to Bellingham. That way, the train does not need to reaccelerate while climbing the slope. After Bellingham, hit Seattle and Tacoma and head all the way up the southern fork's slope to Eugene, then back to Salem and Portland. Now head back west to Spokane. This will pass you back through Pasco, but don't stop. Let the train refill by simply passing through. After Spokane, head south to Missoula and over the mountain pass to Helena. This pass, a terrible slowdown from the east, is fairly easy from the west and shouldn't slow you down much. After Helena, head to the closest town, Great Falls. You absolutely won't have time to get any farther, but you won't need to because Great Falls will be stop 16!

On the easy and normal difficulty levels, this will probably get you the gold. On Hard, your train runs 10 per-

cent slower, so you'll have to push it more. Before you start the route, go into the Camelback's train detail and pull up on the throttle on the engine block. Watch the gauge beside it and make sure the needle passes through the red area to maximum speed. This means that you are pushing the train as hard as it will go. The camelback is fairly dependable, but the Gold will partly depend on luck, so keep your fingers crossed. You can still make the win with one breakdown, but any more will cost too much time, and a crash is an instant loss (not to mention possibly a dead president!).

CAMPAIGN SCENARIO SEVEN: BIRTH OF THE IRON HORSE

This British scenario is a difficult one because of the competition, since the Gold victory requires, among other things, for you to be the only company left alive. This demands that you play on two fronts, basic railroad operations and the stock market. Running a large and powerful company will earn you the $20M also needed for the Gold win, but by scenario seven, you should have developed the skills to run such a company. Getting rid of the competition won't be as simple.

Neither of the competitors are bad enough to run their own companies into the ground, which means that you will need to find more aggressive ways to remove them, and the best way to do this is to play the stock market. Buy up their stocks over the course of the game, and when you can afford to, force a merger.

Platner should be easy game using this tactic, since you are a much better manager than he is. His stocks should sell low and you should be able to earn the votes of the public investors fairly readily. Hudson is a different story. You will either end up barely scraping by with a thin-margined win or a near miss. Or you can do a little more to tip the odds in your favor. After you start developing a strong company, lay in stations right next to his on profitable runs and lay track beside his. In effect, copy his routes. Then run trains and steal his business. As you can afford to, do this to more and more of his runs. Even if you lose a little money in the process, you should be able to make it up with your other routes. This tactic will drastically hurt him. Watch his stock value fall, and when you have done as much damage as possible, go for the merger.

Great Falls or Bust! The yellow handle is the throttle. Cranking it all the way up will end in either the gold or a ball of fire.

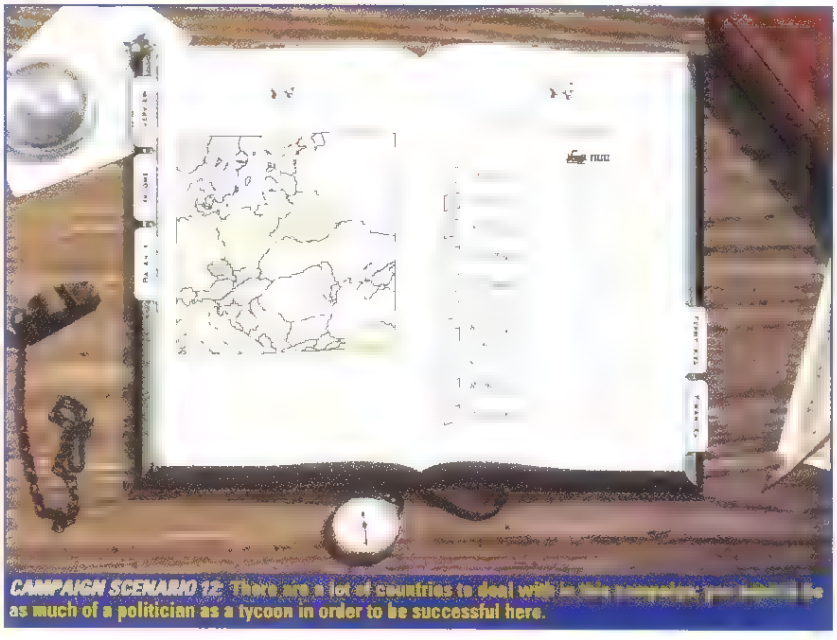
CAMPAIGN SCENARIO 12: WHEN WALLS COME DOWN

The start year (1991) and political situation (Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall) make this a difficult scenario. Resources won't earn as much money while needing to be transported farther, and the train cost will create a high initial cost for your route. Unfortunately, there isn't much to transport inside of Poland, the only territory you have access rights to initially. Much of your hard earned money will need to be spent on gaining further access rights instead of on expanding the company. And in order to win the gold, you must expand a *lot* in order to connect cities ranging from Alborg to Istanbul.

Beyond simply using every ounce of skill you have developed so far, there are other tricks that will help. Remember that the requirement calls for track connecting the cities, not that you own that entire track. If a competing company connects to Venice (another required city), you only need to connect to the closest section of that competitor's track. So let the computer company do as much work for you as he can. Needing access to territories means that goodwill comes into play, and at the start of the game, your goodwill is already fairly high. Make sure you keep it there, and you won't need to pay too much to get into the countries. As you play, some cities will offer very tempting deals to convince you to connect. Unfortunately, it almost always costs more to build the route than you will make on the deal. Only accept if you are developing very strongly and have cash to spend. Otherwise, see them for what they are — distracting red herrings.

After placing my routes beside Hudson's, his stock value plummeted.

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 158



CAMPAIGN SCENARIO 12: There are a lot of countries to deal with as much of a politician as a tycoon in order to be successful here.

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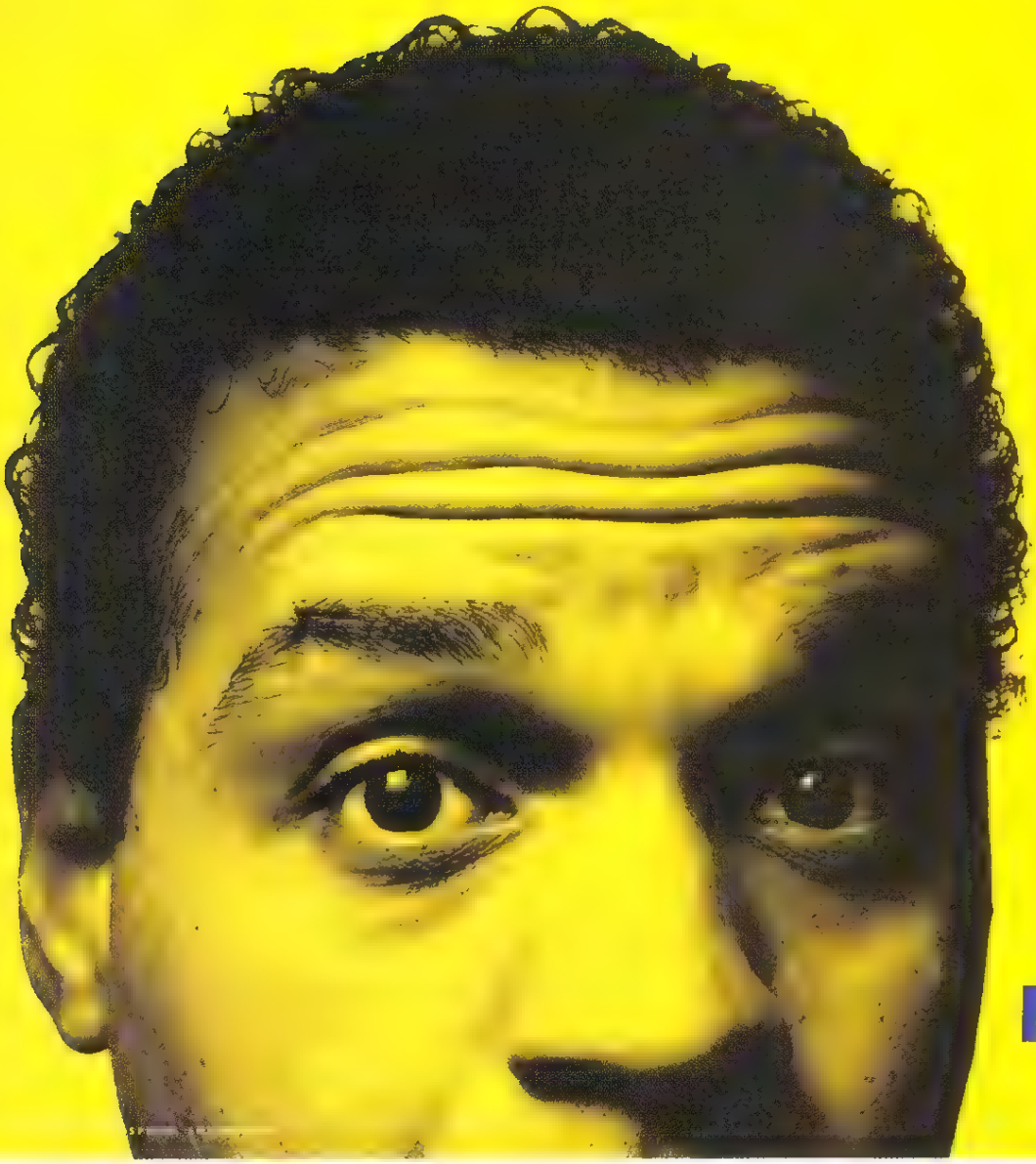
The Internet allows you to talk to people in Germany Russia, China and now, even customer support.



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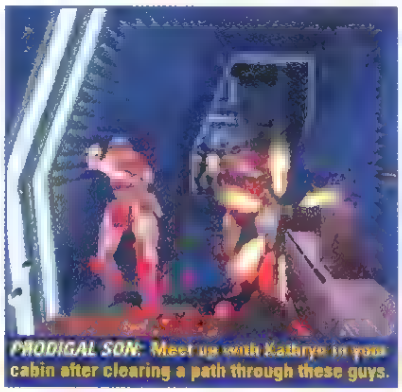
Shogo

Last month we guided you through a large portion of the game, but we knew you'd need time to recover from the breakneck action...so now, gear up for the conclusion!

Prodigal Son

Follow the hallway to the left, pass through the force field door, and walk up the ramp to the top. Follow the path to the right, walk past the stair case, and enter the crew quarters on your right. Walk to the end and enter your cabin on the left to find Kathryn. After your conversation, leave your quarters and head to the left. Follow the rooms to the end and enter the big doorway that was guarded at the beginning of the game. Walk forward to the next door to complete the level.

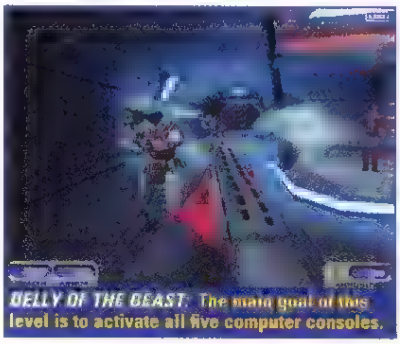


PRODIGAL SON: Meet up with Kathryn in your cabin after clearing a path through these guys.

Belly of the Beast

Go down the hall and take the stairs up on your left. Head forward and take the next set of stairs down on your left to find the Kato Procession Control. Enter the next room and activate computer #1 console. Leave the room and head back up the stairs. Follow the staircase up on your left head up the next staircase on your right, and enter the door to find the Computer Systems Control station and the Electronics Grid 1701 station in the Engineering Command center Activate computers #2 and #3 in this room and head through the door to the left of where you enter the room

Head to the right to a small room and enter the next door. Run to the left and enter the door in the left wall Follow the walkway all the way through the next door and into the Life Support Control room. Activate computer #4, leave the area, and return to the Electronics Grid 1701 station. Enter the door opposite the station and ride the lift up to the top. Exit the lift and follow the hallway through the next door. Activate computer #5 in the Engineering Station.



BELLY OF THE BEAST: The main goal of this level is to activate all five computer consoles.

Now that you have activated all five computers, head up the ramp and enter the door at the top. Follow the walkway, ride the lift to the top, and enter the door at the end. Run to the end of the room, run up the ramp to the upper level, and follow the path to the Kato Storage Reservoir. Enter the room, head to the right, and enter the Kato Allocation Center. Walk to the left and activate the big red switch to cut the power. Return all the way to the Kato Procession Control room and enter the Main Computer Core door. Run to the far end of the room, activate the switch on the wall, and climb down the ladder to the bottom Run to the first console and activate the switch to shut down the Leviathan's main Computer Core. Return to the Kato Storage Reservoir room, follow the walkway along the left side of the room, and enter the door at the far end of the room. Follow the hallway to the end to complete the level.

Unexpected Complications

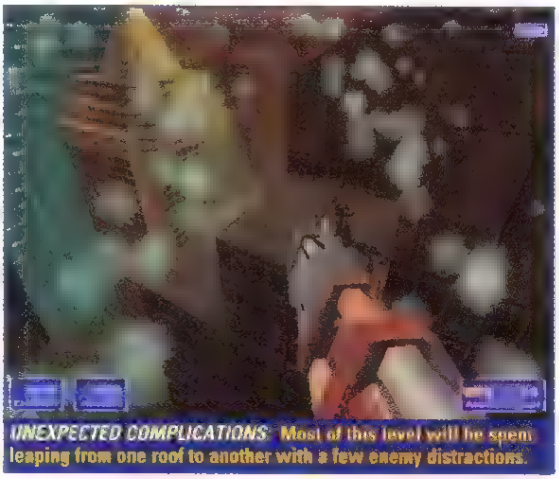
Run to the end of the bridge and enter the lift on your right. Ride the lift to the top and run forward to the edge of the building. Jump forward to the next building and then jump to the highest part of the building. Look down on the right side of the building and jump across to the top of the small building, where an enemy MCA was located.

Use the air vent on the roof of the building to jump across to the pointed building. Jump across to the building down and to your right and then jump across two more buildings to find another air vent on the roof Use the air vent to jump across to the next building. Use this building's air vent to jump across to the next building and use this air vent to jump up to the roof of the next building across from you. Jump down to the air vent on the roof of the next building and use that to jump up onto the roof of the building on your left. From here, jump to the next building on your left and use the next air vent to reach the building ahead of you. Look down on your right to spot a pool on top of a building below you. Jump into the pool, hop out, and follow the long walkway to another lift. Ride this lift down to the bottom to complete the level.

Central Command

Ride the lift up to the top. Walk forward into the Central Command Center. Enter the right room and hop through the window into the hallbelow. Head to the left and enter Storage Room A. Walk over to the crates on your right, shoot out the grate above the crates, and crawl into the access ducts above. Crawl to the left, shoot out the next grate on your left, and jump into the new area.

Walk forward and climb down the ladder to the bottom of the area Follow the long corridor all the way to the MCA throughway and jump down into the MCA area on your right. Head to the right, shoot out the mainte



UNEXPECTED COMPLICATIONS: Most of this level will be spent leaping from one roof to another with a few enemy distractions.

CENTRAL COMMAND: To get in, you'll have to destroy the computer consoles and deactivate the Security Grid Power Core.

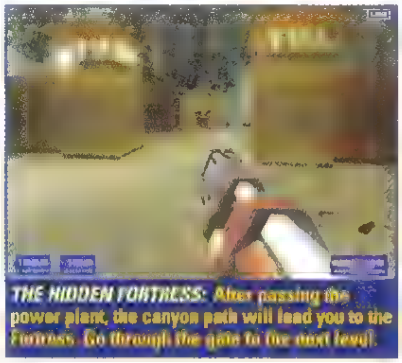
nance hatch, and crawl inside. Climb up the ladder and crawl all the way to the left to the Security Grid Power Core. Climb down the ladder to the computer consoles and blow them into tiny pieces. Climb back up the ladder and crawl forward, over the hole, and to the next vertical conduit. Climb up the ladder on the right wall to the top and crawl all the way forward, over the hole in the floor. Drop down and enter the next conduit below you to find the Environmental Power Core. Blow it to pieces and head down the corridor opposite of where the Environmental Power Core was. Drop into the next corridor below you and enter the door.

Head to the left and enter the door to find Central Command. Head to the far end of the room and take the lift up to the top. Exit the lift, run to the far end of the room, and enter either of the two doors. Walk through the next door after that and follow the hallway to the left. Activate the switch on the wall, head through the next door, and enter the new area.

Follow the arrows on the ground to the right and enter the doors to the Bridge. Walk up the staircase on your right and take the lift down at the top. Exit the lift, run forward, and enter the next door. Run to the front of the bridge and the Admiral will talk to you. After your conversation, leave the Bridge area and take the lift back up to the top. Follow the walkway to your left, past the first door on your left, and enter the second door on your left. Take the stairs up on your left and follow the upper walkway all the way to the far end. Enter the door to complete the mission.

The Hidden Fortress

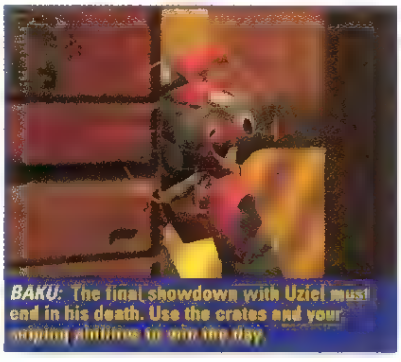
Make your way through the canyons until you see a power plant. Take out all the defenders, pass the plant on the right, and follow the canyon path all the way past a cavern to an underground entrance. Head into the underground area and enter the door. Follow the walkway to the left and take the lift down to the bottom. Exit the lift and head up the second ramp on your left, to the top. Head to the right and take the big lift up to the top. Exit the lift and follow the hallway through the next door. Head outside and follow the canyon path until you find the Fortress. Walk up through the door and destroy the enemies inside the complex. Enter the gate and head down into another underground area to complete the level.



THE HIDDEN FORTRESS: After passing the power plant, the canyon path will lead you to the Fortress. Go through the gate to the next level.

Baku

All you need to do to complete the level is to kill Uziel. Make sure to use the crates for protection and unleash your strongest non-explosive weapons on him. Good luck.



BAKU: The final showdown with Uziel must end in his death. Use the crates and your weapons abilities to win the day.

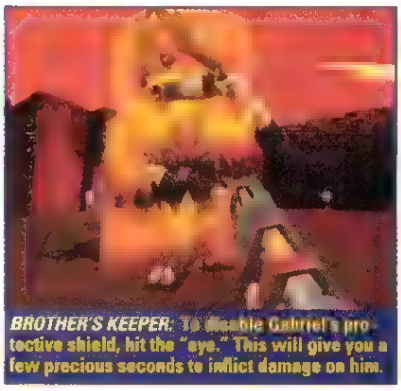
Countdown

Go forward and then head to the left to ride the lift up to the top. Exit the lift, head to the left, and activate the computer console to open a door behind you. Turn around, run around the wall, and enter the open door. Run across the bridge, enter the next door, and head to the right. Activate the first switch at the weapon control station and continue around the room to a stairwell. Take the stairs down to the first door and enter the next floor. Head to the right, activate the second switch, and return to the stairwell. Head down to the next door and enter the next floor. Run to the right again and activate the third switch to shut down the Kato Cannon. Return to the stairwell, and you'll notice one of the windows is broken. Hop through the window and into the next big hallway. Run to your left and head through the doorway in the wall. Walk past the two MCA doors and Ryo will appear in his MCA. Destroy Ryo to complete the level.

COUNTDOWN: After destroying the Kato Cannon, you will have a face-off with Ryo — his ultimate defeat is your only option.

Brother's Keeper

The first thing you need to do is to shoot Cothineal in its "eye". This will temporarily shut down the protective shield that Gabriel has around him. Take a few shots at Gabriel until the shield re-appears again. Repeat again and again until Gabriel is defeated. Ryo will appear with some of his goons. Take them out and then go to work on Ryo. Once you destroy his MCA, he will appear on foot. Take him out for good to complete the mission and the game. Congratulations!



BROTHER'S KEEPER: To disable Gabriel's protective shield, hit the "eye." This will give you a few precious seconds to inflict damage on him.

STILL STUCK? CHECK OUT THE CHEATS ON PAGE 158

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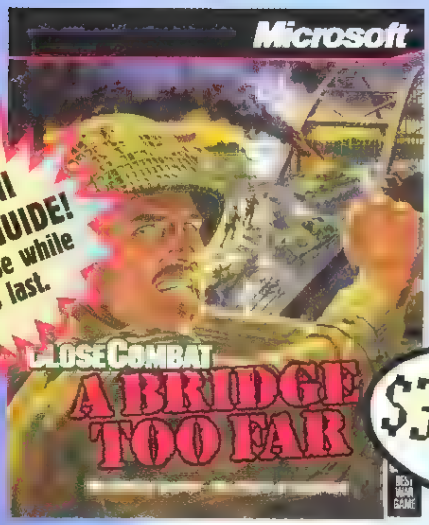

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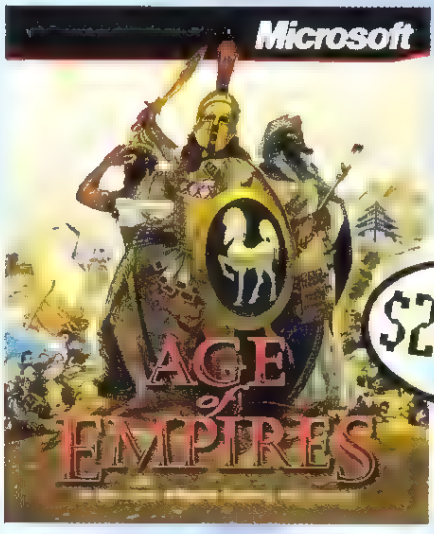

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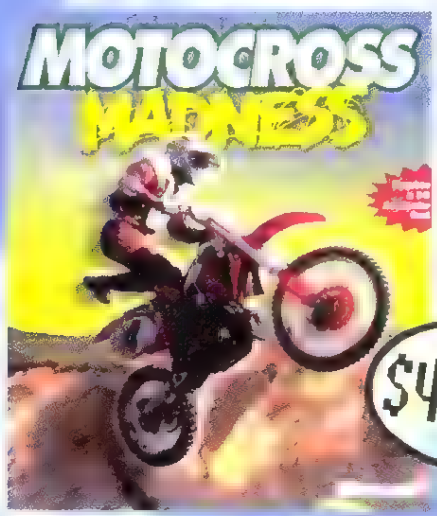

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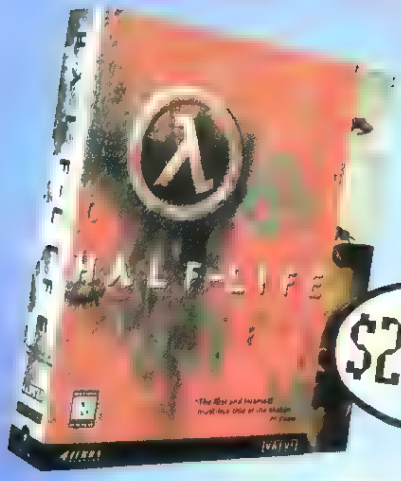

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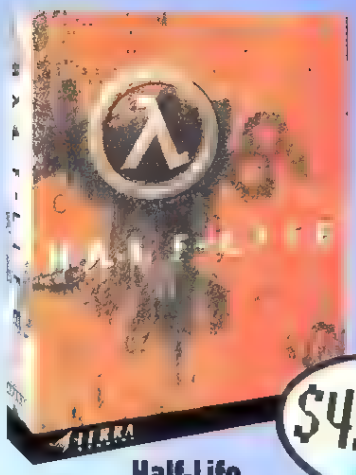

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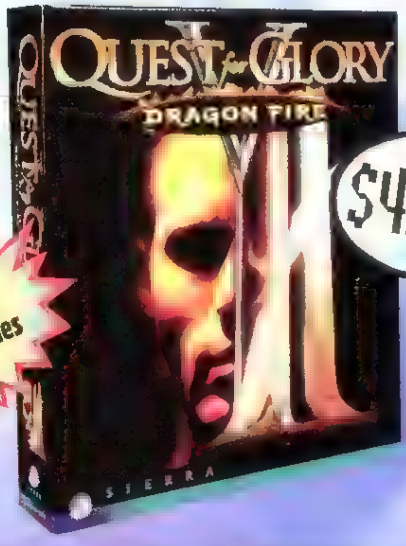

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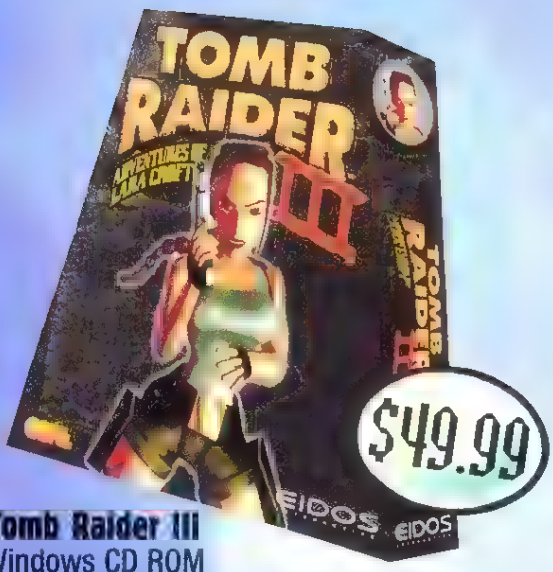

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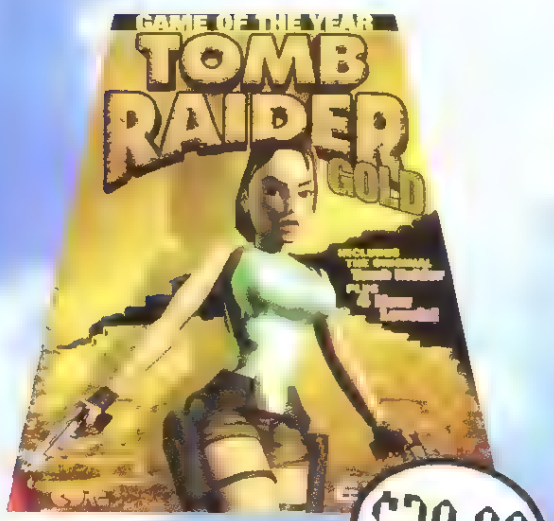

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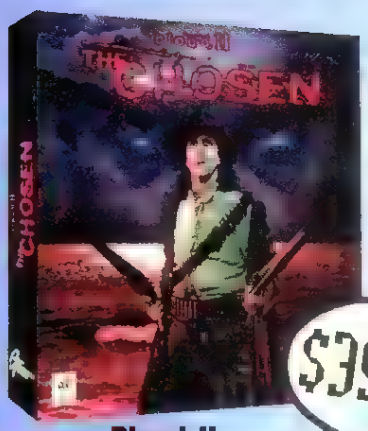

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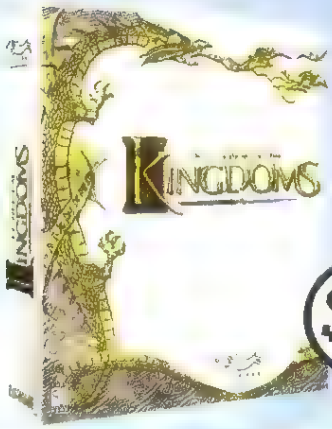

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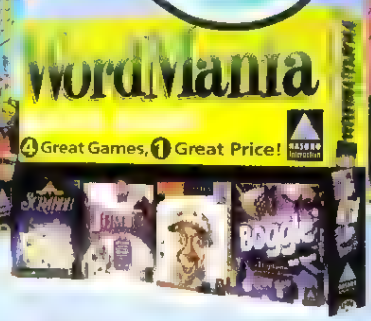

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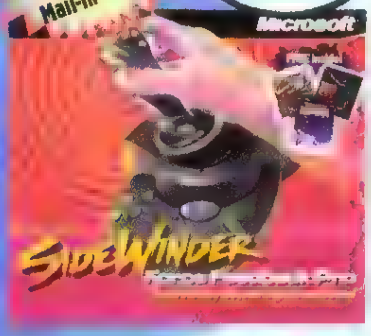

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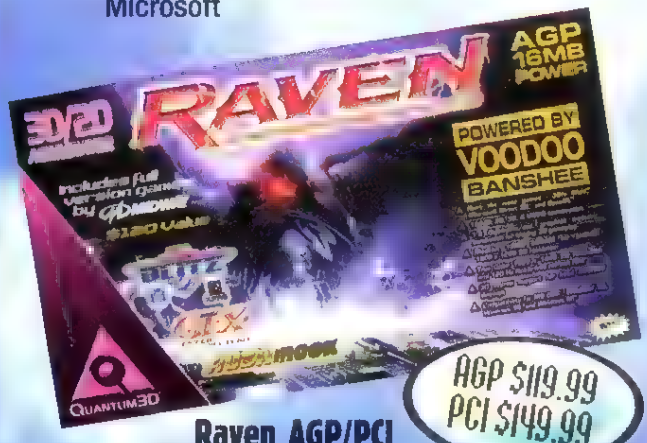

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Cheaters' Corner

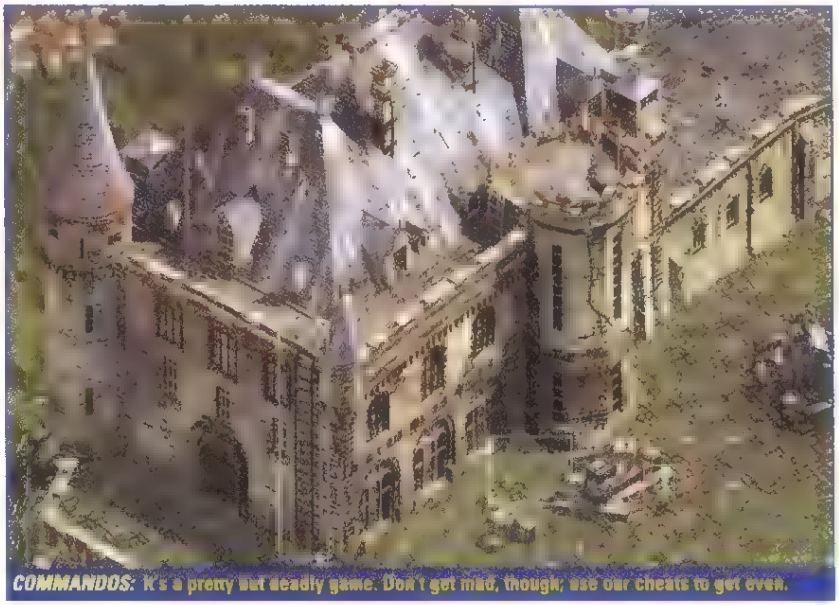
Cheat codes are more than a way to get through a tough game or scenario. They're your friends. Make the most of your relationship with your newfound buddies.

Age of Empires: The Rise of Rome

Press ENTER and type:
REVEAL MAP: Shows the entire map
PEPPERONI PIZZA: Gives you 1,000 food
COINAGE: Gives you 1,000 gold
WOODSTOCK: Gives you 1,000 wood
QUARRY: Gives you 1,000 stone
HOME RUN: Automatically win the scenario
STEROIDS: Buildings are constructed instantly
NO FOG: Removes the fog of war
BIG BERTHA: Gives catapults increased range and damage
ICBM: Increases the range of ballistas
CONVERT THIS!: Gives a new priest unit
BIG MOMMA: Gives you a car unit with a missile launcher
STORMBILLY: Gives you a combat robot unit
GAIA: Lets you control the animals
BIGDADDY: Gives you a car unit with a rocket launcher
KING ARTHUR: Turns eagles into dragons with 999 hit points
GRANTLINKSPENCE: Animals can now kill with one bite
FLYING DUTCHMAN: Allows juggernauts to move on land
HOYOHOYO: Gives you a priest with 600 hit points and a speed of 6
E=MC2 TROOPER: Gives you a unit with a nuclear missile
MEDUSA: Move a villager into an opponent. After the villager dies, it will become a Black Rider. After the Black Rider unit dies, it will become a Heavy Catapult.
PHOTON MAN: Click on the town center to get a laser gunner
JACK BE NIMBLE: Select a catapult, and it will fire peasants.

Blood 2

Press the 'T' key and enter one of the following:
MPGOD: God mode
MPKFA: Gives you full armor, ammunition, and health
MPHEALTH: Gives you full health
MPAMMO: Gives you full ammunition
MPARMOR: Gives you full armor
MPCLIP: No clip mode
MPCAMERA: Change camera angle
MPLIGHTSCAPE: Change lighting



COMMANDOS: It's a pretty but deadly game. Don't get mad, though; use our cheats to get even.

Carmageddon

During the race, just type in any of these codes.
SPAMSPAMSPAMSPAM: Immobile pedestrians
IHAVESOMESPAM: Adjusts gravity
HAMSTERSEX: Blind pedestrians
ILOVENOBBY: See pedestrians on the overhead map
NAUGHTYTORTY: Respawns the pedestrians
RUSSFORMARIO: Electro killing ray
GIVEMELARD: Increases credits
RABBITDREAMER: Adjusts gravity
SUPERHOOPS: Explosive pedestrians
IGLOOFUN: Hot rod power up
BUYOURNEXTGAME: Jelly suspension
CHICKENFODDER: Bouncy suspension
FUNNYJAM: Turbo pedestrians
ISLANDRULES: Vesuvian corpses
SMALLUDDERS: Giant pedestrians
SPAMFRITTERS: Free repairs
GOGGLEPLEX: Underwater ability
SPAMFORREST: Instant handbrake
TRAMSARESUPER: Harvest pedestrians on your bumper

Commandos

To activate the cheat mode, type 1982GONZO during the game and enter the following codes.
CTRL+I: Makes your men invincible
SHIFT+V: Trace line of sight of objects
SHIFT+X: Teleport
CTRL+SHIFT+N: Finish the mission
CTRL+SHIFT+X: Destroys everything in mission
NOTE: Once activated, a cheat cannot be turned off.

In the Password section, type JONXX (where XX is the mission number), and you'll jump to that mission

Deathtrap Dungeon

These cheats should help you lead Red Lotus, the star of *Deathtrap Dungeon*, to the promised land. During the game, type the following:
ELVIS: Invulnerability
TOOLS: Puts all items in your inventory

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON: Red Lotus could use a cheat to get some clothes. She's *got* to be cold.

Delta Force

Press the "~" key to display the console, then type the following:
IWILLSURVIVE: God mode
HITMEWITHYOURBESTSHOT: Increases computer AI
TAKEITTOTHELIMIT: Gives you full ammunition

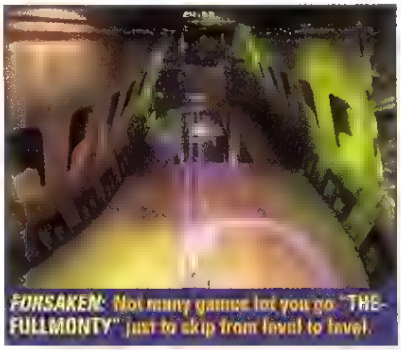
Die by the Sword

To use these cheats, press the F1 key during gameplay and type:
FREEZ: Turns off the artificial intelligence of the enemies on a level. Can also be used in tournament and arena modes.
AGRAV: Any limbs hacked off will be subjected to anti gravity and bounce around the level.
GHOST: Turns off the physics of the enemies while you remain in full control of your character.
AIAIM: Allows you to see the enemies' targeting information on where they think your character is.
DEDLY: Multiplies the damage of your sword by 10 each time you type it, but is not usable in 'net play.
GOLRG: Increases the size of your character by 110 percent each time you type it.
BAMFF: Teleports you to predetermined locations on the level.
MUKOR. God mode. Hits and lava will not do damage, but crushing will.
LUNAR: Reduces the gravity each time you type it. It cannot be turned off once activated.
PEACE: Delivers 50,000 points of damage to any enemies in combat mode.
BTINY: Shrinks your character to 50 percent of original size. Type again to return to normal
HICUP: Randomly launches characters around the screen.
IFALL: Causes your character to trip.
GOCAM: Enables camera that you can move at will. Use CTRL + U, I, O, J, K, L to move on axis. Use CTRL + directional arrows to zoom and rotate. CTRL + mouse rolls camera freely.
FPERS: Displays frames per second.
BZONE: Cycles through graphic modes of the polygons: wireframes, flat-shaded, off, and normal.

DIE BY THE SWORD: Use the "DEDLY" cheat to make your sword hits more damaging.

Forsaken

At the start screen, type BUBBLES and then type:
THEFULLMONTY: Access to all of the levels.
IAMZEUS: God mode.


FORSAKEN: Not many games let you go "THE-FULLMONTY" just to skip from level to level.

Grand Theft Auto

At the Player Select screen, enter the codes you want to use as the player name. Multiple codes can be entered, and when you're done, just enter the name you want to use in the game. You may need to quit out of the game and re-start it to activate the codes.
NINEINAROW: Access to all levels and cities
IAMTHELAW: No police
ITCOULDBEYOU: Gives you 999999999 points
SUCKMYROCKET: Starts you off with all weapons and powerups
ITSTANTRUM: Gives you unlimited lives
HATEMACHINE. Multiplier raised to 10
BUCKFAST: Press the * key on the number pad to get all weapons
HEARTOFGOLD: View all cut-scenes

SPECIAL ADULTS ONLY CHEAT!
This one is only for mommies and daddies who love each other very much. If the foul language of *GTA* isn't enough for you, you can activate a mode with super-XXX-rated dialog! Use the following codes if you dare:
IAMGARYPENN: Enables extra-offensive language mode
IAMNOTGARYPENN. Disabies extra-offensive language mode

Half-Life

When loading the game, type "HL.EXE –CONSOLE." Press the ~ key to open the console and type 'SV CHEATS 1' to enable the cheat mode. Reload your game and open the console again and type in the cheat:
/GOD: God mode
NOCLIP: No clip mode

Jazz Jackrabbit 2

Type these codes anytime during the game:
JJGOD: Gives Jazz invincibility, plus all weapons and power-ups
JJINV: Invincibility only
JJSHIELD: Gives various shields
JJCOINS: Gives free coins
JJMORPH: Change into Spaz, a bird, a frog, and back to Jazz
JJGEMS. Gives free gems
JJAMMO: Gain extra ammunition
JJFLY: Gives you the ability to fly like in the original game
JJPOWER: Gives weapon power-ups

Jedi Knight: Mysteries of the Sith

You may be tempted by the dark side to use these codes. To use them, press the "T" key while playing and type in the code. Some codes are followed by a 1 or 0 to toggle them on or off.
IAMAGOD: Gives you all force powers — light and dark
DIEDIEDIE: All weapons
GIMMESTUFF: Full inventory
GAMEOVER: Skips to the next mission
STATUESQUE 0/1: Freezes all creatures and prevents them from moving or attacking
TRAINME: Increases your force level by one
FREEBIRD: Lets you fly around
BOINGA 0/1: The invulnerable god mode
TRIXIE: Increases your mana level to full
CARTOGRAPH: Shows the entire map, including locations of creatures
GOSPEEDGO 0/1: Causes all creatures to move in slow motion

Lords Of Magic

Hit the CONTROL key and the BACKSLASH key to bring up the cheat dialog, and then type:
JACKPOT: Gives you 200 gold, crystal and ale
MARATHON: Gives 1,000 movement

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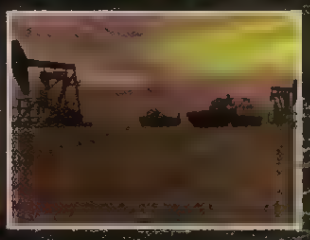

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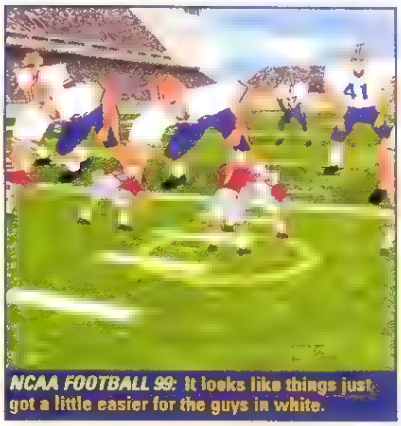
points to the selected party
PUFF: Gives you a dragon
HOCUSPOCUS: Grants you all spell knowledge, and gives 1,000 mana to the selected party

NCAA Football 99

To enable these codes, go to the controller select screen and type:
ELAH: David and Goliath mode: Big guys versus little guys in a battle for pigskin supremacy.
ELECTRIC: Remember the footbal game from your childhood where you lined up the players on a metallic field, turned on the power, and then watched as they ran around in circles? Well, you can relive the pre-PC era with this handy little code, guaranteed to bring the memories flooding back.



NCAA FOOTBALL 99: It looks like things just got a little easier for the guys in white.

Need For Speed III: Hot Pursuit

Type these at any menu to activate:
RUSHHOUR Increases the traffic
EMPIRE: Enables the Empire City track
ELNINOR: Enables the El Nino car
MERC: Enables the Mercedes CLK GTR
GOFAST: Increased speed in single race mode
ALLCARS: Enables all cars, including pursuit vehicles
JAG: There's another car hidden away in the bowels of the program, and this cheat will let you drive the Jaguar Sport XJR 15...sweet!
MONKEY: Hate shifting gears but want the efficiency of the manual transmission? Here's the answer to your prayers.
MADLAND. For the ultimate driving challenge, use this code. This removes all restraints from the AI cars, allowing them to drive at their maximum ability...good luck.

NEED FOR SPEED III: Use the "JAG" cheat to unleash the power of this Jaguar Sport XJR-15.

Type these *Need for Speed III* codes right before clicking RACE to use the non-player vehicles:
GO01: Mazda Miata
GO02: Toyota Landcruiser
GO03: Cargo Truck
GO04. BMW 5 Series
GO05: 1971 Plymouth Barracuda
GO06. Ford Pickup with Camper Shell
GO07: Jeep Cherokee
GO08: Ford Van
GO09: 1965 Mustang
GO10: 1966 Chevy Pickup
GO11: Range Rover
GO12. School Bus
GO13: Caprice Classic Taxi
GO14: Chevy Van
GO15: Volvo Station Wagon
GO16: Sedan
GO17: Crown Victoria Police Car
GO18: Mitsubishi Eclipse Police Car
GO19: Grand Am Police Car
GO20: Range Rover Police Car

NFL Blitz

These cheat codes are entered at the versus screen. The numbers refer to the number of times you need to hit the Turbo, Jump, and Pass buttons. For example 4-3 2 Right means you need to hit Turbo 4 times, Jump 3 times, Pass twice, and press the direction pad to the right. You will hear the name of the code announced. More than one code may be used simultaneously.
UP Late hits
0-4-5 UP: Super blitzing
0-4-0 UP: Huge heads
3-1-2 UP: Power up offense
4-2-1 UP: Power up defense
2 1 0 UP: No first downs
3-4-4 UP: No interceptions
1 5-1 UP: No punting
2 3 3 UP: Power up teammates
4-3-3 UP: Invisible
5-1-4 UP: Infinite turbo
5-5-5 UP: Hyper Blitz (must be agreed to by both players)
0-3-0 DOWN: Fog on
0-0-1 DOWN: Show field goal percentage
4 2 3 DOWN: No random fumbles
0-1-2 DOWN: No CPU assistance (must be agreed to by both players)
1 1 1 DOWN: Tournament mode (two player game only)
3 1-4 DOWN: Smart CPU opponents (one player game only)
5-2 5 DOWN: Weather: snow
0-3-2 LEFT: Fast turbo running
1-2-3 LEFT: Super field goals
1-1-5 LEFT: No play selection (must be agreed to by both players)
2 1 2 LEFT: Weather: clear
2-5-0 LEFT: Fast passes
2-1-1 LEFT: Allows players to step out of bounds
3 3-3 LEFT: Invisible Receiver highlight
3 2-1 LEFT: No heads
3-1-2 LEFT: Power up blockers
4 0 4 LEFT: Power-up speed (must be agreed to by both players)
5 0 0 LEFT: Turn off stadium
0-5-0 RIGHT: Big football
0 2-1 RIGHT. Show more field (must be agreed to by both players)
1-0-2 RIGHT: Hide receiver name
1 4-1 RIGHT: Team big players
1-2-3 RIGHT: Headless team
2 0 0 RIGHT: Big head
2-0-3 RIGHT: Team big heads
2 2 2 RIGHT: Night game
3 1-0 RIGHT Team tiny players
5-5-5 RIGHT: Weather: rain

NHL 99

Crushing hits, swinging sticks, and spraying ice are all a part of this fantastic game from EA Sports, and as always the programmers also included plenty of goofy hidden stuff. To use these cheats, click QUIT, select CREDITS, go the PROGRAMMER CREDIT SCREEN and type the code. If you did it right, you'll hear a sound and see one of the programmers raise his arms.
EAONLINE: Lets you play over the Internet using TCP/IP. Depending on the speed of your connection (and your opponent) your mileage may vary when it comes to playability.
HEADBONE: Have you ever seen those dolls with the big heads that some people like to put on their dashboards? Use this code to make the players' heads freakishly large.
BUFFED: If the ice isn't crowded enough for you, use this cheat to turn the players into giants.
1999: Forget about having to battle your way through the playoffs — use this code to view the Stanley

NHL 99: This goalie is too small. This goalie is too big. This goalie is *just right.*

Cup video that is the prize for besting the competition.

QUICKER: The action is pretty fast and furious to begin with, but if you want to speed things up, use this code to give every player super speed and skills.

NOBODY: Those pesky fans are annoying, especially if you're on the road. Get rid of the rowdy bunch by using this cheat

GULLIVER: The game already features super goalies, but if you want their stature to surpass their skills, this cheat will take them to impressive heights.

WARP9: Even faster than the Quicker cheat, you'll be hard pressed to follow the stupidly fast action after using this code

CRANKIT: Having trouble accessing higher video resolutions with your Direct3D card? Use this to unlock all the available resolutions (be advised that not all cards can handle higher resolutions and may lock up your system).

Rainbow Six

Hit ENTER to open the in-game chat box, and type these in for the desired effects. **Warning:** These codes only work in single-player mode!

1 900: Exaggerated breathing effect

5FINGERDISCOUNT: Restores full ammo

AVATARGOD: Makes your player invincible

TEAMGOD: Makes your entire team invincible

BIGNOGGIN: Large head mode

MEGANOGGIN: Extra-large head mode!

EXPLORE: Toggles victory conditions on/off

NO BRAINER: Toggles enemy AI on/off

SILENTBUTDEADLY: Makes you, erm, break wind, while moving

TURNPUNCHKICK: Turns characters into two-dimensional figures

Railroad Tycoon II

During play, press the "TAB" key and type one of the following:

BIGFOOT: Instant win (Gold)

BOBO: Instant loss

CATTLE FUTURES: Give player $1M

KING OF THE HILL: Give player $100M

SLUSH FUND: Give company $1M

POWERBALL: Give company $100M

AMTRAK: Company loses $1M

SPEED RACER: Train speeds double

AMD103: All your engines change to AMD103s (any year)

CASEY JONES: All other company's trains crash

SHOW ME THE TRAINS: Allows any engine to be purchased

OVERTIME: Doubles industry production

VIAGRA: Doubles population

LET ME IN: Opens access to all territories

Seven Kingdoms

To enable the cheat mode, type !!!@@@### and then press the key listed below:

C: Adds $1,000 to your bank account.

\: Adds 1,000 to your food reserves.

T: Gives you all technological advances and scrolls.

M: Shows the entire map.

;: Increases the population in a selected city. The nationality of the additional people will be random.

=: Use to increase prayer points in the selected Seat of Power.

B: Immediately completes construction of the selected building.

Z: Toggles the fast build mode on and off.

U: Makes the king immortal.

Shogo: Mobile Armor Division

To use these cheats, hit the "T" key, type the code into the dialog box, and press enter.

MPCAMERA: Not happy with the current camera angle? Use this to change it.

MPLIGHTSCAPE: Lighting effects abound in *Shogo*; use this code to alter how they are displayed.

MPKFA: Searching around for weapons and armor can be frustrating, so use this code to get access to the whole kit and kaboodle.

MPARMOR: Okay, maybe you just want a little protection and don't need a fancy new weapon. Use this to have your pick of the best armor.

MPGOD: Those enemy attacks can be sooo annoying! Use this code to become invulnerable.

MPTEARS: An empty weapon is a serious hazard to your health, so use this code to reload your arsenal.

MPHEALTH: Even the mightiest warrior can take only so much abuse. If you're on your last legs, use this cheat to restore your health to full.

MPCLIP: Is that locked door annoying you? Well, worry not as this cheat

SHOGO: Quick! Use the "MPHEALTH" cheat to restore your health before they hit you again.

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code lets you pass through it (and everything else) with impunity.

To access any level hit the "~" key, which brings down the console, then type "WORLD LEVELNAME" where "levelname" is one of the following:
01_AMBUSH
02_QUARTERS
03_MCA_DOCK
04_SHUTTLEBAY
05 LZ_MINOTAUR
06_ENTRANCE
07_AVERNUS1
08_AIRSHAFTS
09_COMM1
10_COMM2
12_COMM3
13_NEW_MCA
14_MARITROPA1
15_DEPOT
16_SLUMS
17_LOST_CAT
18_SLUMS
19_RENDEZVOUS
20 MARITROPA1
21_MARITROPA2
22_TRAM
24_CMC_SEC1
25_CMC_SEC2
26 TRAM
27_NEW_MCA
28_AIRSHIPDOCK
29_AIRSHIP
30_RESEARCH
31_AVERNUS1
32_MUSEUM
33 QUARTERS
34_ENERGY_PLANT
34 SPIRES
35_COMMAND
35 FORTRESS
36_ELEVATOR
36_KATO_CENTER
37_GABRIEL

Sin

Go to the console and type:
/HEALTH 999: Gives you 999 health
/WUSS: Gives you all weapons
/SUPERFUZZ: God mode
/NOCOLLISION: No clip mode

StarCraft

During the game, press ENTER and type one of the following codes. Hit ENTER again to activate the cheat:
MAN OVER GAME: Win game
GAME OVER MAN: Lose game
OPERATION CWAL: Speeds up building and gives instant upgrades
POWER OVERWHELMING: Makes

STARCRAFT: When you just can't take those Terrans stomping on you, do as we do — cheat!

buildings and ships indestructible
WAR AINT WHAT IT USED TO BE: Removes fog of war
SOMETHING FOR NOTHING: Upgrades everything
MEDIEVAL MAN: Gives free upgrades to units
FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Eliminates supply limit when building units
BLACK SHEEP WALL: Shows full map
THE GATHERING: Gives unlimited psionic ability
NOGLUES: Takes away opponents psionic ability
THERE IS NO COW LEVEL: Skip the current mission
SHOW ME THE MONEY: Increases minerals and gas by 10,000
WHATS MINE IS MINE: Increases minerals by 500
BREATHE DEEP: Increases vespene gas by 500
MODIFY THE PHASE VARIANCE: Allows you to build anything
OPHELIA: Enables mission select codes. Must be used before the following:
TERRAN XX: Select Terran mission ("XX" is the mission number).
ZERG XX: Select Zerg mission
PROTOSS XX: Select Protoss mission
STAYING ALIVE: Allows you to continue the current mission even if it is completed

TOCA Touring Car Championship

Enter these codes as if you were naming your driver. The game will announce that the cheat is enabled, and then you can enter your name.
JHAMMO: Access all tracks
CMLOCK: Lock tracks back up
PATSCREEM: Obtain TOCA Showdown, mirrored championship
CMNOHITS. Disable collision detection
CMSTARS: Staring sky mode
CMTOON: Cartoon background
CMDISCO: Volcanic track
CMCOPTER: Helicopter view
CMGARAGE: Bonus car
CMCHUN: Go-kart mode
CMLOGRAV: Low gravity
CMRAINUP: Reverse falling rain
XBOOSTME: Fast mode, all cars driving faster
CMMICRO: Micro Machines mode
CMMAYHEM: All AI cars drive like madmen

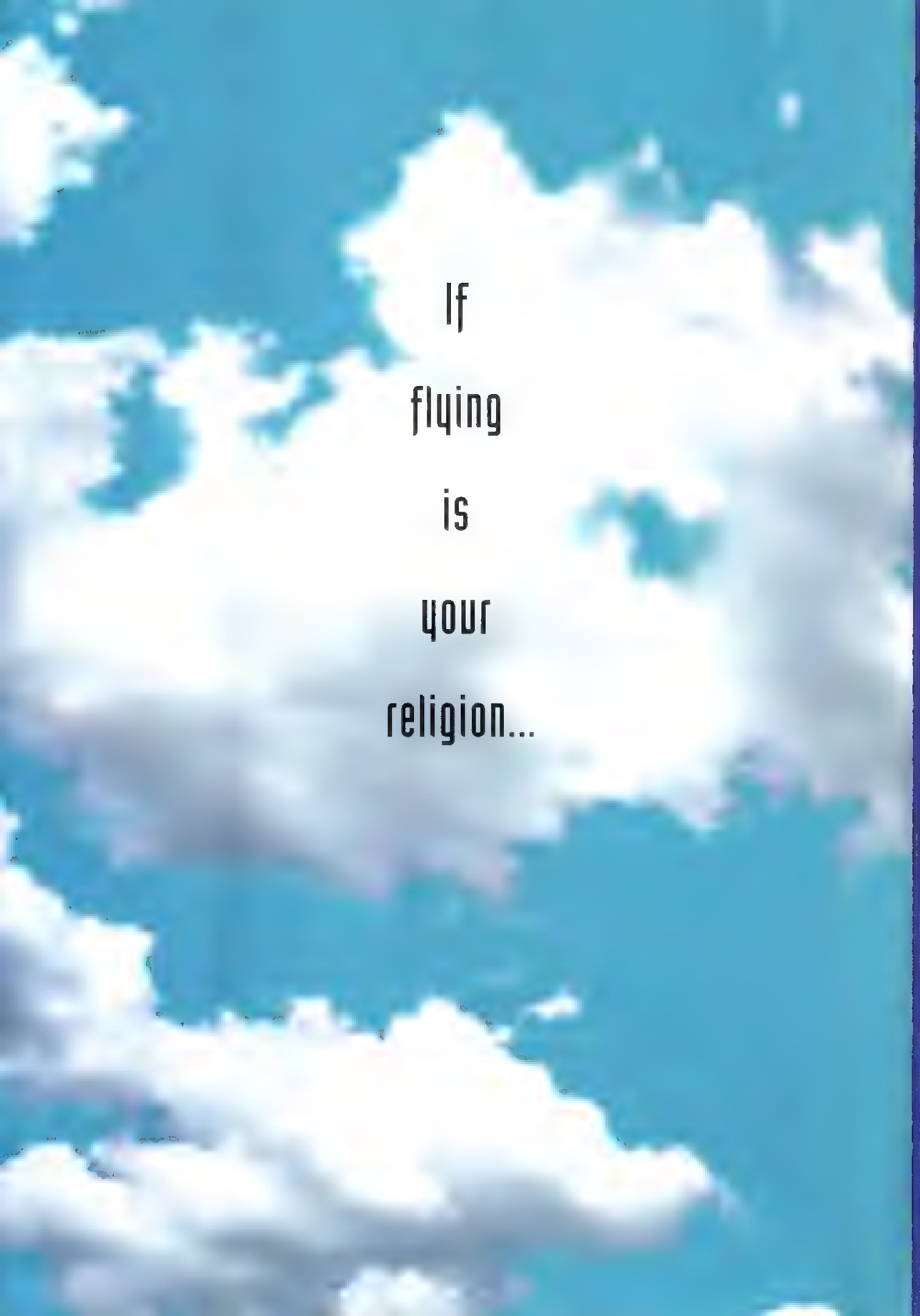
Test Drive 4

To get these cheats to work, go to the Save Game screen, select slot #10, type in the code and press ENTER. If you hear a horn sound, you will know that the code has been entered correctly. Multiple codes can be used. In a LAN game, everyone must use the same codes or the game may crash.
AARDVARK: All collisions are turned off
NOAICARS: No computer controlled cars during LAN racing
STICKIER: No 3D collisions, but cars will still spin if hit
SRACLLA: Unlocks all cars
LEVELLLA: Unlocks all tracks
SPAZZY: Very bizarre effects while racing
MIKTROUT: Very large cars
MPALMER: Very small cars
GONZON: Turn hyperspeed on
GONZOFF: Turn hyperspeed off
BIRDVIEW: Top down camera view
NITROXXX: Turns your horn into a turbo boost

Trespasser

To activate the cheats, press the CTRL key and F11 and then type:
GORE 2: Super gore mode — if there's not enough blood for you, even after taking a baseball bat to a defeated raptor's head, this one's for you...you sick puppy.
WIN: If you want to bypass the whole process of having to actually play the

TRESPASSER: If you've seen this view once too often, throw away that wet hanky, type in some cheats, and kick some prehistoric butt!



game, this code will let you view the end cut scene without having to risk even a broken fingernail.
WOO: No, it's not the sound you make when you look down at your little heart tattoo, but a tribute to the over-the-top filmmaker. Use this one for unlimited ammo
BIONICWOMAN. Emulate Steve Austin's main squeeze with this code that puts the gameplay into slow motion. You'll have to provide the bionic power sound effects yourself, however
TNEXT: Need a quick escape from your current predicament? Use this code to teleport yourself to a new location within the leve
CTRL + SHIFT + Q + W: Keep all four keys pressed at once and then release the W to gain access to all levels.

Tomb Raider III

LEVEL SELECT: Take out your pistols, step forward, duck, turn around three times, and jump forward.
WEAPON SELECT: Take out your pistols, step forward, duck, turn around three times, and jump backward

Unreal

Press the "~" key to open the console and type in any of the codes below
GOD: Gives 999 rounds for al weapons.
GHOST: Turn on no clipping mode
FLY: Turns on Flight mode.
WALK: Turns off both flight and no clipping modes.

UNREAL: Boy, somebody beat this guy with an ugly stick. Use the cheats to do it again.

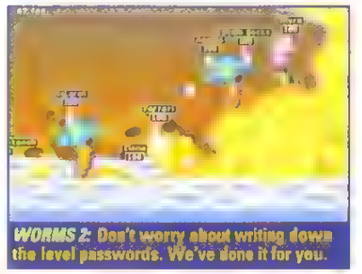
PLAYERSONLY Stops time from passing. Type again to start up again.
BEHINDVIEW 1: Gives you a third-person perspective.
BEHINDVIEW 0: Resets normal first person perspective.
OPEN (MAP NAME) Go to any level in the game

Map Names:
Bluff • Ceremony • Chizra • Dark • Dasacellars • Dasapass • Dcrater • Dig • DKNightOp • DMARIZA • DMCURSE • DmDeathFan • DmDeck16 • DMElsinore • DMfith • DmHealPod • DmMorbias • DmRadikus • DmTundra • Dug • Endgame • Entry • ExtremeLab • ExtremeEnd • ExtremeGen • ExtremeBeg • ExtremeCore • ExtremeDark • ExtremeDGen • Gateway • Harobed • IsvDeck1 • IsvKran4 • IsvKran32 • NaliBoat • NaliC • NaliLord • Noork • NyLeve • Passage • QueenEnd • Ruins • SkyBase • SkyCaves • SkyTown • SpireVillage • TerraLift • Terraniux • TheSunspire • Trench • Unreal • VeloraEnd • Vortex2

Uprising

To enable each cheat, you first hit the "M" key, type the code, then hit ENTER. The combination cheats are cumulative, meaning you must already be in a prior cheat mode before being able to access them.

CHUMP Invincibility
DANGEROUS: Unlimited weapons
TUFF ASS Super weapons
SUPER CHUMP: Super speed and Invincibility. You must already be in Chump mode. Type Chump again.
DANGEROUS CHUMP: Unlimited weapons and Invincibility. You must already be in Chump mode Type Dangerous.
TUFF ASS CHUMP: Super weapons and Invincibility. You must already be in Chump mode. Type Tuff.
DANGEROUS SUPER CHUMP Unlimited weapons, Super speed, and Invincibility. You must already be in Super Chump mode. Type Dangerous
TUFF ASS DANGEROUS SUPER CHUMP: Unlimited weapons, Super weapons, Super speed, Invincibility. You must already be in Dangerous Super Chump mode. Type Tuff Ass.


WORMS 2: Don't worry about writing down the level passwords. We've done it for you.

Worms 2

Here are the level passwords for the single player game. When using the cheat codes, type them in and then press BACKSPACE. Your worms should jump up and the message "OK" should appear
1 ONCEUPONA
2 TIMETHEREWERE
3: SOMESMALLWORMS
4. WHOGOTVERYVERY
5 ANNOYEDAND
6: DECDEDTO
7: GOTOARMSIN
8: ORDERTOWIPE
9: OUTTHER
10. VICOUSENEMY
11 COUNTERPARTS
12: THEYDEVELOPED
13 SOMEREALLY
14. COOLWEAPONSSUCH
15 ASBANANABOMBS
16: ANDMAGICBULLETS
17 THEYTRAINED
18. ALLNIGHTSAND
19. EVERYDAYSOTHEY
20 WOULDBECOME
21 PROFICIENT
22. INTHEIRNORMLY
23 WAYSSOMETIMES
24: THEYWOULDSHOOT
25. GRANNIESJUST
26. FORGONANDLAUGH
27 ABOUTITINTHE
28 EVENINGTIME
29 WEAPOLOGISEON
30: BEHALFOFALLTHE
31: TERRITORIESTHAT
32 WEWENTTOTHE
33 TROUBLEOFTRANSLATING
34. WORMS2INTOBUTME
35 DIDNTHAVETIMETO
36: TRANSLATETHESE
37: PASSWORDSNOTTHAT
38. THEYNEEDTOBEDONE
39 WESUPPOSETHAT
40: YOUAREREALLY
41 EXPECTINGTO
42. SEEAWONDERFUL
43: CHEATMODEWHEN
44. FINISHTHEMISSIONS
45: ANDYOUARERIGHT

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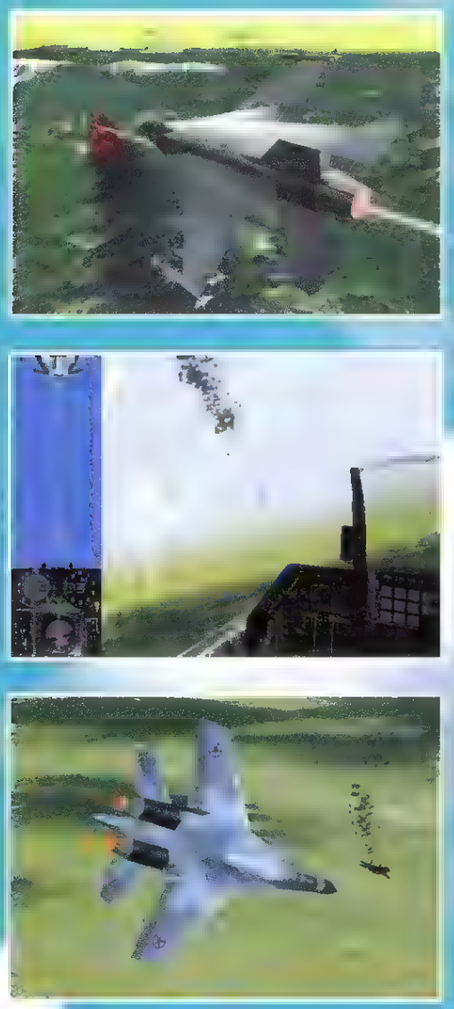

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The *PC Gamer*

We asked, you answered, and now it can be told: Here are the 50 best games of all time, according to the readers of *PC Gamer*.

Some readers of *PC Gamer* — and you know who you are — weren't entirely pleased with our choices for the best games in the history of PC gaming ("The 50 Best Games Ever," October 1998), and boy, did you let us know about it. We wouldn't have it any other way — but in the interest of fairness, we invited our readers to come up with their own Top 50.

In addition to that wonderfully controversial feature, the October 1998 issue contained a mail-in card that asked each and every reader to list his or her ten all-time favorite games. Needless to say, we got a truckload of responses — and we turned 'em all over to an honest to goodness research firm to be compiled into the list you see before you (that Herculean task took longer than expected, which is why you're reading this in the February 1999 issue rather than in January 1999).

If you look closely, you'll notice the Readers' Top 50 actually contains 59 games. That's because there were a surprising number of ties, including a three-way contest for that jealously coveted #45 spot. Some other surprises arose from the fact that the entries were all hand-written, and the research firm didn't know diddly poop about computer games.

For example, a game called *Jazz Jack Rabbi* got ten votes — we assume this is an arcade-style game starring a saxophone player who has studied in Jerusalem. Then there was *The 7th Guess* — which is actually a pretty good description of the way we solved most of the puzzles in that game.

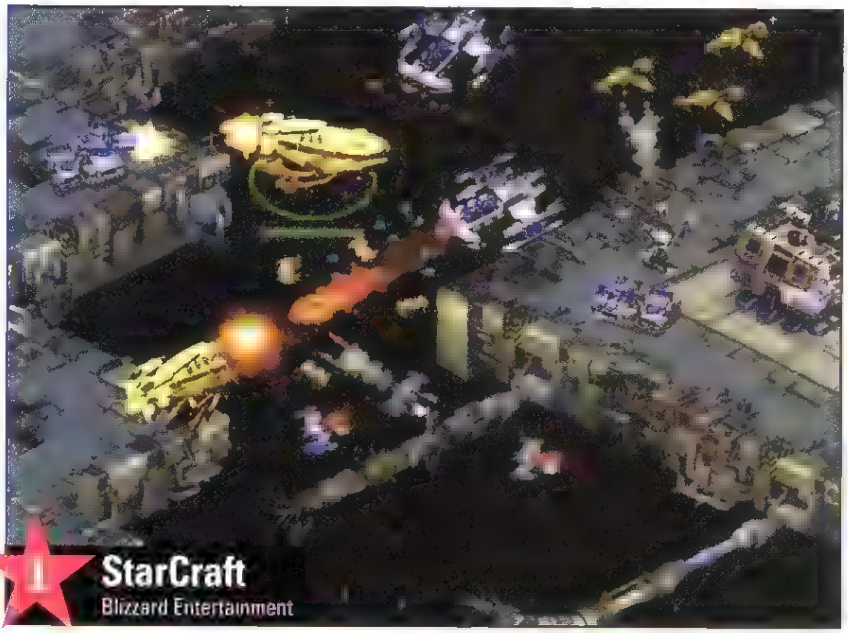
There were several votes for something called *James F-15*, which confused us until we realized it must be a reference to "James at 15," the critically acclaimed 1970s television show starring Lance Kerwin. It's not a computer game, but we can understand why it still holds a warm spot in some people's hearts, so we decided to include it. Unfortunately for James — who must be nearly 40 by now — he didn't get enough votes to make the list.

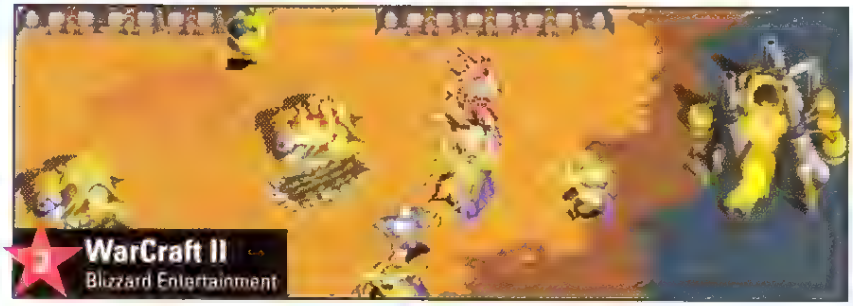
We were pleased to see that *Beavis and Butt-Head in Virtual Stupidity*, the graphic adventure we ranked #24 back in October — and one of our most controversial choices — garnered votes from 18 readers. Not nearly enough to make the Top 50, but at least a few intelligent readers out there agree that it's a great game. We can only assume all the others haven't played it.

Also gratifying were the three votes that went to our own Coconut Monkey's long-awaited *Gravy Trader*, despite the fact that the game has yet to be released or even previewed. And simply puzzling were the two votes that went to a game apparently titled *Unreal Sux Ass*.

But never mind all that. Let's get to the list to end all lists, The *PC Gamer* Readers' Top 50!

PCG





Readers' Top 50

6. **Civilization II**
   MicroProse
7. **Duke Nukem 3D**
   3D Realms
8. **Command & Conquer: Red Alert**
   Westwood Studios
9. **Doom**
   id Software
10. **Heroes of Might & Magic II**
    New World Computing
11. **Quake**
    id Software
12. **TIE Fighter**
    LucasArts Entertainment
13. **Unreal**
    Epic Megagames
14. **Command & Conquer**
    Westwood Studios

    SimCity 2000
    Maxis
15. **X-COM: UFO Defense**
    MicroProse
16. **Tomb Raider**
    Eidos Interactive
17. **Age of Empires**
    Microsoft

    Total Annihilation
    Cavedog Entertainment
18. **Fallout**
    Interplay
19. **Doom II**
    id Software
20. **Myth**
    Bungie Software
21. **Might & Magic VI: The Mandate of Heaven**
    New World Computing
22. **The Curse of Monkey Island**
    LucasArts Entertainment
23. **Final Fantasy VII**
    Eidos Interactive
24. **Sam & Max Hit the Road**
    LucasArts Entertainment
25. **Interstate '76**
    Activision
26. **Battlezone**
    Activision
27. **MechWarrior 2**
    Activision
28. **Dark Forces**
    LucasArts Entertainment
29. **Wolfenstein 3D**
    id Software
30. **Master of Orion**
    MicroProse
31. **NHL 98**
    EA Sports
32. **Rainbow Six**
    Red Storm Entertainment

    Worms 2
    MicroProse

33. **Longbow 2**
    Jane's Combat Simulations
34. **Myst**
    Broderbund Software
35. **Lemmings**
    Psygnosis

    X-Wing
    LucasArts Entertainment
36. **Links LS**
    Access Software

    Ultima VII
    Origin Systems
37. **System Shock**
    Origin Systems
38. **Civilization**
    MicroProse
39. **Railroad Tycoon**
    MicroProse
40. **X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter**
    LucasArts Entertainment

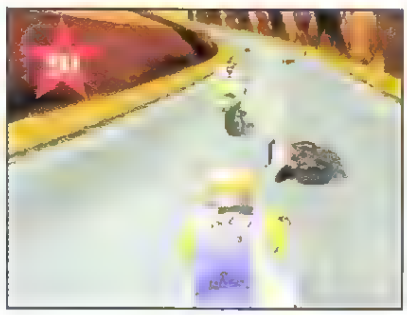
41. **Betrayal at Krondor**
    Sierra
42. **Descent**
    Interplay
43. **Master of Orion II**
    MicroProse

    WarCraft
    Blizzard Entertainment
44. **Dune II**
    Westwood Studios

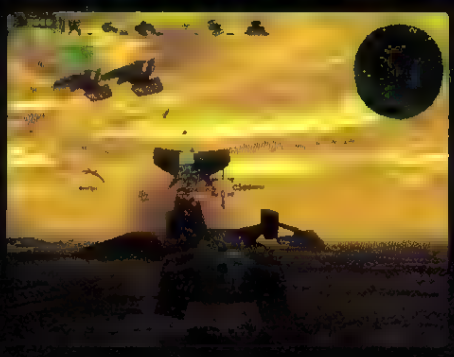
    Grand Theft Auto
    ASC Games
45. **Daggerfall**
    Bethesda Softworks

    Panzer General II
    SSI

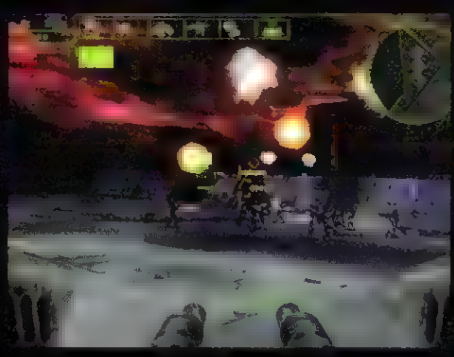
    Tomb Raider 2
    Eidos Interactive
46. **Master of Magic**
    MicroProse
47. **Lords of the Realm II**
    Sierra
48. **MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries**
    Activision
49. **Red Baron**
    Dynamix
50. **MotoRacer GP**
    Electronic Arts



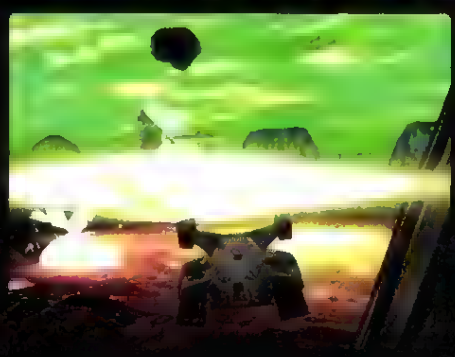
"★★★★★"
Next Generation



Stunning 3D graphics – unbelievably beautiful environments



Dozens of detailed campaign options: varied missions and realistic play



Peripherals supported: DirectX supported joysticks, 3D cards and Force Feedback

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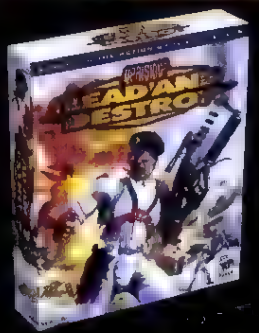

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This game is for mature audiences.

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Behind the glamour — the harsh reality

And so, as Todd Vaughn packs his bags and trudges off over the horizon, *PC Gamer* finds itself without one of its longest serving and most valued team members. But as we wipe a bittersweet tear from our eyes, we realize that it's a time for looking forward, not back, and work is already underway on finding a successor (as opposed to a replacement because you just can't replace the inimitable Todd). We're interviewing applicants right now, but finding the right person for the job (or rather, convincing the right person to take the job) is no easy task, when you consider some of the unsavory duties involved

- Spending extended periods on the phone with Colin Williamson as he recounts his latest *Animal House*-style college-life anecdotes
- Sitting next to Whitta all day, particularly after he's eaten a whole tube of fat-free Pringles and the inevitable "chemical reaction" has begun.
- Every December, listening to Dan's *Cat's Christmas* CD, containing an hour of infernal, tuneless meowing;
- Having to negotiate Vederman's sprawling, post modern assault course of empty computer boxes and defunct computer junk simply to get to and from your desk.
- While we're on the subject of Vederman, constantly playing agony aunt as the daily soap opera that is his rollercoaster love life unfurls in tragicomic fashion.
- Living, basically, on a lunchtime diet of either "Hackhckkhckalash" from the increasingly bizarre downstairs deli, or take out from KFC, Taco the Town, Chin House (best soapy pot stickers in Brisbane!) and the occasional trip to Hungry Hunter.
- Building their own office PC from scratch, because you can bet that the sweet 450MHz system Todd is leaving behind will be field stripped by *PC Gamer*'s cackling hardware vultures within five minutes of his departure;
- Two words. Bucket Week.
- Getting sent so much stuff each month that most of it is, by the law of averages, disheartening. For example, for every copy of *Half Life* or *European Air War* you receive, there's also *EXtreme Paintbrawl*, *Dominion*, yet another *Quake* bundle, *Creatures 2*, *Dogz* and *Catz*, *Cabela's Big Game Hunter II*, *Junkland Jam*, *Math Advantage Deluxe*, *Redneck Rampage Possum Bayou*, *Ages of Myst* and *Skiing 99*. Get the picture?
- Anything to do with Billy

Hardware Requirements

With each *PC Gamer* review, you'll find two very important pieces of information: the game's minimum hardware requirements and the hardware configurations we recommend as the *least* you'll need to really enjoy the game. While a game will run on the minimum system the manufacturer specifies, it might not run all that well. Because of this, we test each game on several systems so we can bring you a more realistic assessment of what you'll *really* need

THE PC GAMER RATINGS SYSTEM

PC Gamer Editors' Choice Awards

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Every month, we honor the best games we see — those earning 88% or above — with our Editors' Choice award. It's not easy to earn, and there are a lot of excellent games that fall just short of the honor. So when you see the *PCG* Editors' Choice logo on a game at a local software shop, you can bet it's among the best.

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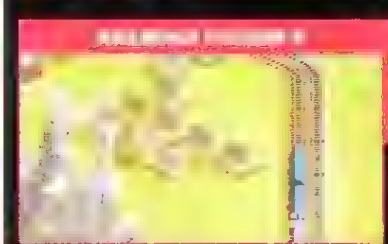
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Railroad Tycoon II

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

CATEGORY Strategy DEVELOPER PopTop Software PUBLISHER Gathering of Deve opers, (214) 303 1202, *www godgames com*
REQUIRED Windows 95/98, Pentium 133 16MB RAM, 4x CD ROM drive, 130MB hard drive space WE RECOMMEND 8x CD-ROM drive, Pentium 200, 32MB RAM MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS Modem 28 8, Ser a /null modem, IPX, TCP/IP, Maximum players 8, Free internet play via *www heat net*

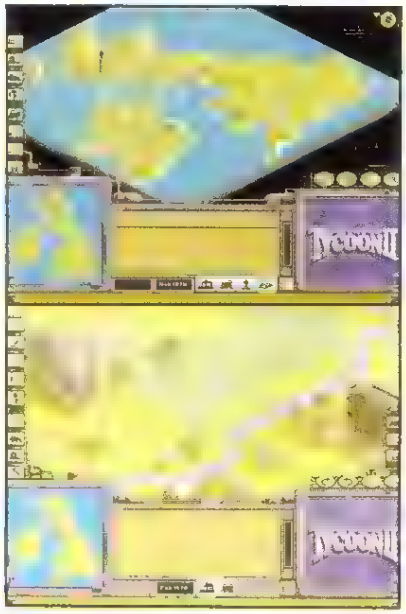
This modernized homage to a true PC gaming original does Sid Meier's classic very proud.

Like most kids, I had a set of toy trains. Every Christmas, I'd lug out the big box filled with various cars, pieces of track, scenery, and several transformers (which invariably failed to work until some major electrical repairs were performed), and have a whale of a time running my own little railroad. But the magic waned when I got to around 10 years old, and for the next 15 years, I never had the urge to look at or play with toy choo-choos again.

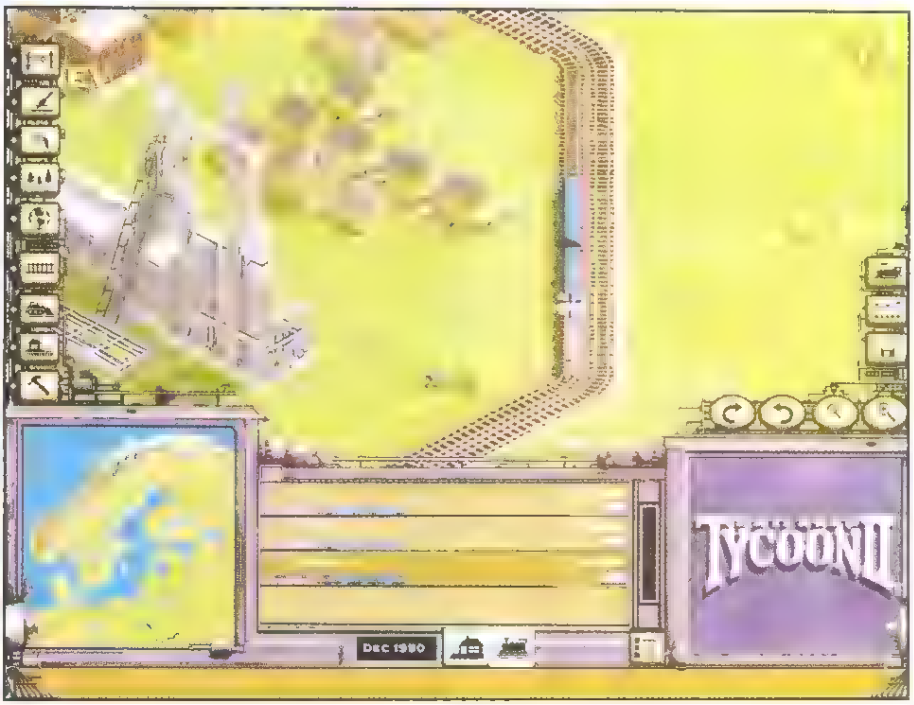
What brought me back to the fold was a 1991 game called *Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon* — it was one of the most addictive and engrossing experiences I've ever had with a computer game, even rekindling my childhood interest in trains. So, the news of PopTop Software's *Railroad Tycoon II* had me salivating in anticipation, despite the absence of Meier's input this time around. And I haven't been disappointed — PopTop has delivered a beautifully designed game that brings the rock-solid gameplay of *Railroad Tycoon* to a new generation of PC gamers.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, *Railroad Tycoon II* is a strategy game in which the object is to create a successful railroad company and amass a fortune fit for a rail baron. The player must build stations to collect the various cargo loads from the surrounding area and come up with routes that will take advantage of supply and demand between stations. There are 34 different types of cargo, most having some kind of relationship with another. For example, a cattle ranch will provide cattle, which can be taken to a meat processing plant to create food, which can then be hauled to most cities for a nice price. It's this relationship between cargoes that is the heart and soul of *Tycoon II*'s strategy element, but the game also features a fairly in-depth financial model. To succeed at the higher difficulty levels, you'll need to be as shrewd in manipulating the stock market as you are at streamlining your rail operations.

Above all else, what makes *Tycoon II* a joy to play is the interface. The amount of information presented to (and needed by) the player is enormous, and could easily become overwhelming. But the interface lets the player concentrate on the gameplay without being burdened by menus and switches. All the building tools and game controls are accessed through a single button. Four more buttons stationed permanently at the bottom of the screen give you basic information regarding your stations, trains, personal wealth, and corporate wealth. If you need further details, just double-click on the item you want to access. Using the included tutorial, I was able to fly through the various screens with ease, making the initial learning process much less frustrating than with a lot of other strategy games that have a lot less information to manipulate.



The levels of zoom let you view the big picture or get in for a close up view of the animated buildings and water



You'll have more than 60 different train types to choose from, depending on the year

Predictably, the main improvement over the original *Railroad Tycoon* is the look of the game. The isometric 3D graphics, which run at 1024 x 768, are nicely detailed with rolling hills, animated water and buildings, and some of the prettiest trees around. If your monitor or graphics card can't handle this resolution, you're out of luck, but at least no accelerator is needed. The maps were designed using aerial photographs to create the contours and valleys and so, viewed from a distance, these lush terrains look incredibly realistic. One minor disappointment is that you must build over a mountain rather than being able to tunnel through it.

http://pc.ign.com

There are plenty of improvements you can easily make to your stations, such as hotels, saloons, and a roundhouse for keeping your trains running efficiently.

Track running over steep inclines looks disjointed, and the train animations suffer. Except for this minor problem though, *Tycoon II* is a beautiful game to behold, much nicer than the little dot like houses and blocky buildings of the original. For those with slower systems many of the graphic features can be set lower to get the game to run acceptably, and it still looks great.

Accessibility is a major point in *Tycoon II*'s favor. Anyone from the complete strategy game novice to the veteran railmaster will find a combination of difficulty settings to make them happy. There's even a "sandbox" mode that does away with monetary concerns allowing you to build your dream rail network at your leisure. There's a large number of scenarios set all over the globe (parts of the United States, China, England, etc.) that let you select how involved you want to get. Adjustable difficulty makes things harder by dictating that you only get paid for cargo that is in demand, for example. For the Wall Street types, you can set the stock market to allow buying and selling on margin as well as the ability for rival tycoons to take over your company (of course, you'll be able to do the same to them). For a less demanding challenge the difficulty can be toned way down allowing for payment on delivery regardless of whether the station wants a specific load of cargo, and the stock market can be limited to purchasing shares in your own company.

An included 18-scenario campaign increases in difficulty as you progress although the difficulty curve seems a bit be steep. There are three levels of success to achieve, usually based on completing a goal by a certain date and attaining a minimum level of money. But in the campaign scenarios I've played, the money hasn't been the problem -- it's a lack of time. For instance, the second scenario requires that you connect New York and Chicago and haul a number of loads between the two cities. Finding the cash to lay the track can be overcome, but the vast distance between the two cities and the limited number of years you have to complete your goal is the ultimate challenge -- and one I was unable to meet after five attempts. Scenario three proved the same daunting task and was a bit discouraging, but I'm still going back to try new ideas, which says a lot about the game's addictive quality.

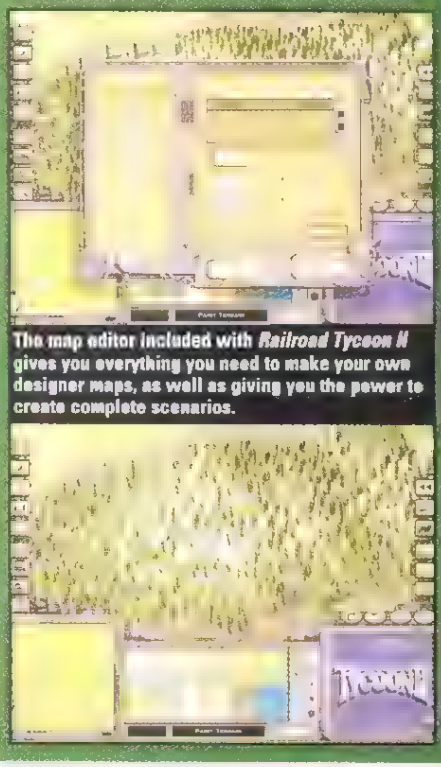
Choosing the cargo your trains will carry is simple, thanks to the excellent interface.

This review can't possibly do justice to the depth of gameplay that makes up *Railroad Tycoon II*. It's safe to say that anyone who played and liked the original will be enthralled for hours on end with this new version, and those who are unfamiliar with the simple charms of the original will be in for a very pleasant surprise. It's loaded with more detail, the financial model is much deeper, and the 40 chairmen (computer opponents) play with a convincing and ruthless style. There's even a multiplayer mode that reminds me of playing a game of speed chess and is a whole heap of fun. Besides the difficulty of the campaign game, there's little here to complain about, other than the fact that conventional strategy gamers may be turned off by the fact that you need to defeat your opponents financially, rather than blowing them up with the latest in high-tech weaponry. Top things off with a map editor (see sidebar) and you have the makings of a game that will stay on your hard drive for a good long time.

Rob Smolka

I've Been Working on the LANDSCAPE

The maps that come with *Railroad Tycoon II* cover a good portion of the world, but there's always room for new scenarios. The editor allows you to take an existing map, build your own from scratch, and even import a grayscale image to use as the basis for your creation. The tools allow you to raise or lower the terrain, paint or fill large swathes with the various land types (grasslands, desert, etc.), add trees, divide the land into territories, and place buildings and cities. You can also create detailed scenarios, adding triggered events, text boxes, which managers you want to include, as well as how the economy will grow, and which industries will appear. Basically, the editor lets you script a scenario using the same tools that the designers used, giving *Railroad Tycoon II* unlimited playability.



The map editor included with *Railroad Tycoon II* gives you everything you need to make your own designer maps, as well as giving you the power to create complete scenarios.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

92%

HIGHS: The pretty graphics and stellar interface enhance the already deep and entertaining gameplay.

LOWS: Difficult campaign scenarios; no tunnels.

BOTTOM LINE: Strategy gaming at its finest — minus all the senseless violence.

http://www.pcgamer.com

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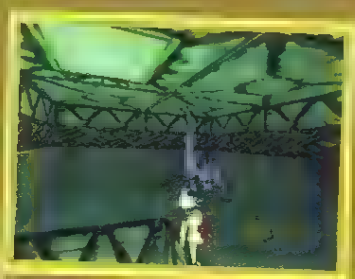

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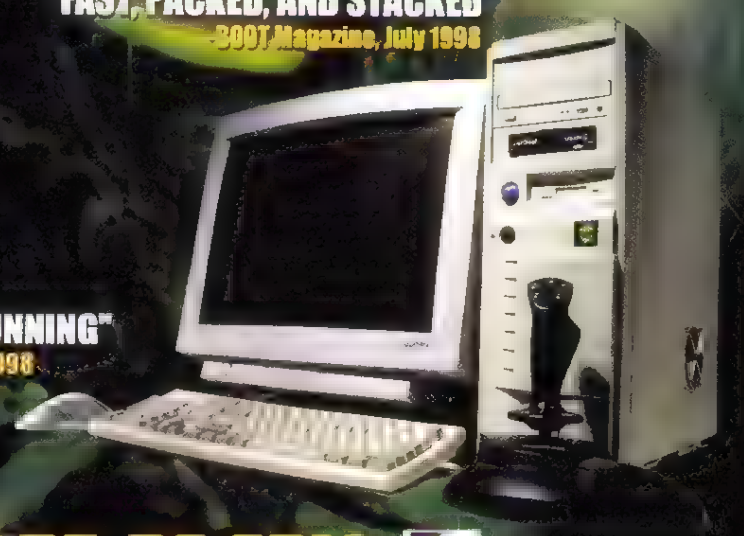

"PERFORMANCE WAS SIMPLY STUNNING"
-Computer Gaming World, July 1998

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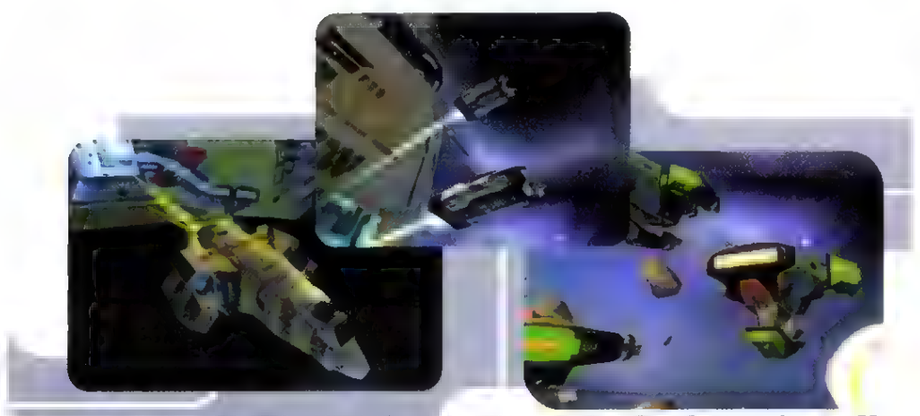

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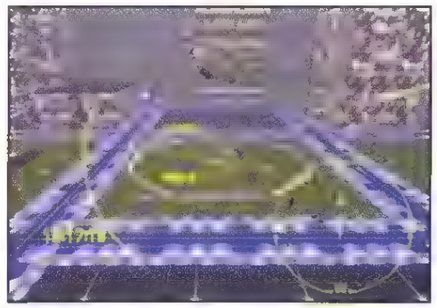
Barrage

CATEGORY Arcade DEVELOPER Mango Grits PUBLISHER Activision, (310) 255-2000 *www.activision.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 133, 32MB RAM, Direct3D accelerator card WE RECOMMEND Pentium 233 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics- or Voodoo 2 based accelerator card, Supported sound card MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS Modem 28.8, IPX, TCP/IP Maximum players 8

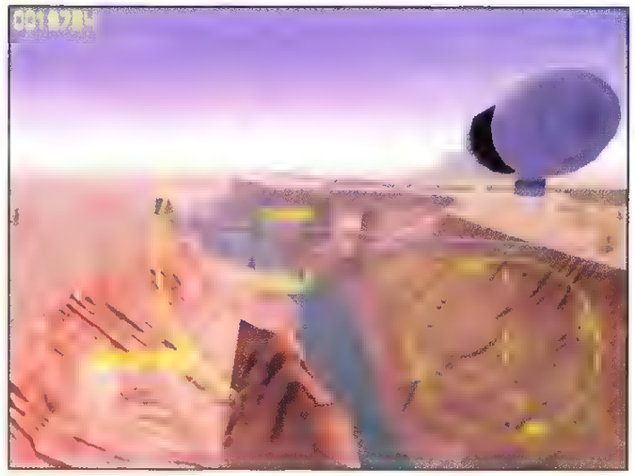
Even though *Barrage* has beautiful graphics and explosions a-plenty, there's just not enough substance here to warrant a purchase.

The first time I saw a flight simulator running on a Silicon Graphics workstation, I was flabbergasted. Everything about the program was gorgeous — from the seemingly never-ending vistas to the superb texture work and the precise lighting effects — and I just knew it was something I wanted to play. Though there have been a lot of 3D accelerated fly-around and shoot games lately, none have really captured the guttural eye candy overload of the early SGI stuff — until now. The folks at Mango Grits really know their 3D hardware, and have delivered one of the most gorgeous shooters ever — but in a cruel twist of fate, the game play never holds its own when compared to its pretty pictures.

In *Barrage*, you play some sort of Mercenary Pilot Guy sent in to kill things for one reason or another. This oh so memorable setup is explained in the opening cutscene, which features what must be the worst acting in PC gaming history. Even though there are times when campy acting can work well (*Sin* is a good example), this is embarrassing beyond belief. Once you get past the Shakespeare, you get to fire up the first mission — a quick-and-dirty blast across a beautifully modeled prairie town. In most of the maps, your goal is to fly around and grab certain items, be they nuke parts or energy generators, while a disembodied redneck voice (that takes great pleasure in calling you "baby") gives you helpful hints. Once you've rammed into enough objects, it's on to the next stage. In the world of mindless arcade style shooters, this thin combination of story and gameplay might be acceptable if the entertainment were there, but *Barrage* never really succeeds on this level due to its wobbly series of levels and forgettable gameplay.



In the futuristic Chicago stage of the game, it's a game of cat-and-mouse through a *G-Police*-like urban cityscape — complete with innocent commuter traffic begging to be blown up.



In Coyote Canyon, you'll dart underneath a waterfall into an underground cave complex packed with nondescript and poorly armed bad guys. Personally, I'd prefer sticking around outside and admiring the vista...

Barrage features a scant five stages, plus a "tournament" mode where you pound through all of them at once. Though the levels are decent enough the first or second time around, there's just not enough here to make it worth the cash. What *Barrage* does deliver, however, is a frantic — and sometimes confusing — pace. At almost all times, powerful enemies are swarming around you and firing off missile after missile, but they present little challenge since you're given unlimited laser fire and missiles, so trigger mashing won't deplete your resources. Virtual invincibility is yours as well — if you run out of energy, you're forced to land on the ground while your power levels replenish, then it's off to work again. The only thing to fear is the continually ticking clock — every time you crash, you lose several seconds from your time limit.

Also worth mentioning is the control scheme — while the options screen gives you extensive choices in terms of controller configuration, your craft's handling just doesn't feel *right*. The flight model is loosely based on that of *Descent*, where you're required to hold down the accelerator to go forward, and hovering in space is simple. However, you can't angle straight up or down, nor can you perform barrel rolls or loops, which makes it difficult to flip about and dish out the hurt to your opponents.

Though the action chugs a bit on a first generation Voodoo card, a fast system and a Voodoo2 or Riva TNT will deliver eye candy sweeter than blueberry frosted donuts stuffed with Gummi Bears. When it comes to top notch texture work and beautiful sprawling environments, Mango Grits truly knows its stuff. Though there are a few sequences where the game takes a *Descent*-like twist and heads into a series of interconnected tunnels, the graphics are most impressive during the large outdoor vistas. The stage set in futuristic Chicago is one of the most graphically intense, putting Psygnosis' work on *G-Police* to shame.

Still, beauty is only skin deep, and *Barrage*'s shaky gameplay and questionable length make it hard to recommend. If you're searching for something to show off your new 3D hardware, you've come to the right place — just don't expect something you can come back to after the graphics rush wears off.

—*Colin Williamson*

PC GAMER TRIAL VERDICT

34%

HIGHS: Sugar-sweet graphics from guys who seem like they know what they're doing.

LOWS: Wacky controls; bad acting; short length.

BOTTOM LINE: Though *Barrage*'s graphics are lovely, the gameplay just ain't there.

NO HYPE

CONTINUE

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YOU MAY CONTINUE.

if (range < gunstatic->bulletrange*bonus)
if (gunCanShoot(ship, gun))
switch (gunstatic->guntype)
case GUN_MissileLauncher:
if (gunHasMissiles(gun))
matGetVectFromMatrixCol3(shipheading,ship->rotinfo.coordsys);
vecDotProduct(*trajectory,shipheading);
shotguns = TRUE;
ALL GAME
if (dotprod >= triggerHappy)
missileShoot(ship,gun,target);
case GUN_MineLauncher:
if (gunHasMissiles(gun))
matGetVectFromMatrixCol3(shipheading,ship->rotinfo.coordsys);
vecDotProduct(*trajectory,shipheading);
if (dotprod >= triggerHappy)
missileShoot(ship,gun,target);

Fallout 2

PC GAMER EDITORS CHOICE

CATEGORY Roleplaying DEVELOPER: Black Isle Studios PUBLISHER Interplay, (800) 969-4263, *www.interplay.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 90, 16MB RAM, 30MB hard-drive space WE RECOMMEND Eight speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 233; 64MB RAM MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS None

With challenging quests, addictive turn-based combat, and a fascinating storyline, Interplay delivers more roleplaying delights.

When Interplay released *Fallout* late last year, the roleplaying genre received a much-needed shot of adrenaline thanks to its gritty, violent tale of mutants, radioactive ghouls, and wild-eyed bands of survivors. Brought to life with moody graphics, a slick character creation system, and an easy-to-control turn-based combat system, the post apocalyptic setting and bloodthirsty combat of *Fallout* revealed itself to be more than a clever gimmick — it was an honest-to-goodness role playing game that both veteran RPG fans and novices could enjoy

Now little more than a year after its release, Interplay has returned to *Fallout's* desolate wastelands with a full blown sequel that rewards the player with deeper gameplay and greater emphasis on character development as they traverse its deadly world.

Set decades after the end of the first game, *Fallout 2* builds on the gritty post apocalyptic feel by introducing you to a different part of the world Northern California and puts you in the shoes of a naive villager sent on a desperate mission. A descendant of the heroic vault dweller from the first game, you must brave the unknown to save your people from impending doom as crops lay dying and violent outsiders threaten the tribe's way of life During the opening sequence, the tribal elders send you in search of the Garden of Eden Creation Kit (G.E.C.K.) — a marvel of technology that will allow you and your people to create a vibrant new city

By talking to characters and learning their special skills, you'll be rewarded with new abilities and skills that can help you get a leg up in making that first million!

Once outside the village boundaries, you begin making your way to the small, and not so small, outposts of humanity scattered throughout the region to try and locate the G.E.C.K., and even get the chance to visit some old haunts from the previous game. However, while veteran vault-dwellers will have little problem figuring out what to do, the pace of *Fallout 2* may take a bit of getting used to. For starters, *Fallout 2* is several times larger, with more quests, a more challenging economy, and far deadlier foes; you begin the game with very limited resources and few opportunities to advance. As a result, careful attention to your character's development is far more important this time around, as the skills you choose to enhance can have a profound effect on your experience, especially early on

During the initial stages of the game, you'll need to employ a variety of skills and abilities to ensure your survival since weapons are extremely difficult to find, and healing items, though free, require a lot of legwork to produce. Ultimately, you'll have to rely on your character's abilities and skills to make up for the shortfall in supplies and, in my case at least, this meant using tactics I'd never even bothered with in the original *Fallout*. After struggling to get ahead in the first few towns of *Fallout 2*, my character made heavy use of the Steal ability just to scrape together enough bottle caps (the unit of currency in this post apocalyptic world) to gain adequate weapons or health to complete my first few quests. After getting caught rifling through the pockets of drug addicts and mental cases, I resorted to grave robbing to fill my

Set several decades after the events of *Fallout*, the towns and cities of *Fallout 2* are more prosperous and more dangerous than in the previous game, so you'll need to be more careful.

If you've ever wondered where game designers get their ideas, check out this small homage to "Star Trek"'s classic "City on the Edge of Forever" episode.

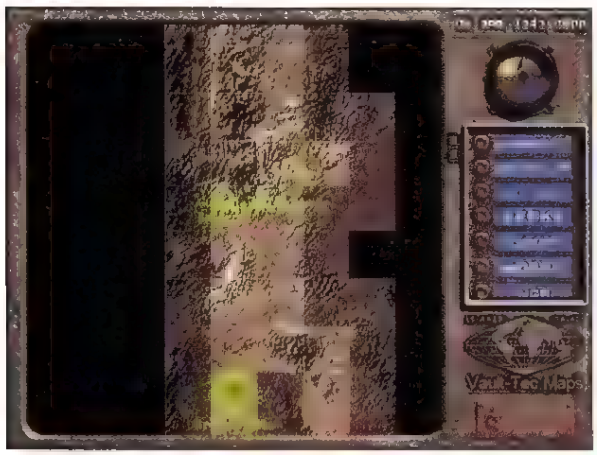
http://pc.ign.com

Though there aren't any of the time sensitive quests like those found in the original *Fallout*, you'll receive pleading reminders from your Elders about your primary quest.

pockets While it didn't help my karma one bit to be seen desecrating graveyards, I could at least console myself with the knowledge it was more profitable than stealing from children — and less dangerous

While it is far more difficult to get ahead in *Fallout 2*, the problems you encounter fit well within the fiction (after all, things are pretty bad all around), and the designers have added a few extra features that do allow you to get a leg up. By talking and training with certain non-player characters you can gain valuable experience in a number of areas. In one town, I learned how to skin geckos (overgrown lizards with a nasty bite), a skill that allowed me to earn money without resorting to digging up graves or pickpocketing winos, and in another, I improved my melee fighting abilities enough to kill the geckos without wasting precious ammunition

As in the original *Fallout*, talking with NPCs plays a significant role in developing the plot and mood of the game, and on this front, *Fallout 2* does a great job of giving the people and locations you encounter a personality all their own. Towns are more than just colorful quest locations; they are small societies struggling with survival in their own peculiar ways. In some towns, you



The world map for *Fallout 2* is quite a bit larger than in the original *Fallout*, featuring dozens of locations and lots of random encounters. Until you've developed your Outdoorsman skill, traversing the map on foot is both hazardous and time consuming.

If you're the type that likes to drop in unannounced, just remember that in certain locations, non-player characters aren't as forgiving if you bear the mark of a slave trader

may find the populace fearful of outsiders due to past indiscretions by previous travelers; in others, you'll find crime, corruption, and sex running rampant on the streets. Throughout it all, you'll have to decide which side to take on such issues such as slavery, prostitution, and drug dealing. For instance, you can become a slaver and collect "servants" for a price, solicit "attended" baths for personal pleasure, or join the drug scene and tune it all out

Once you've sampled the local wares and talked to anyone who'll listen, you'll pack up your gear and head out to complete your overall quest With a world map several times larger than in the original game, there is a lot of ground to cover. A high rating in your Outdoorsman skill can make things less dangerous, giving you the ability to skip some of the random encounters with raiders, creatures, or oddball characters, but even if you skip them all, moving from place to place on foot can be a time consuming and arduous task

To their credit, the designers have provided a solution to this traveling dilemma by adding the ability to use a car (if you're lucky enough to find one in working order), and this does alleviate much of the problem. Unfortunately, traveling by car is also one of the buggiest features in the game, as graphics have a tendency to disappear during certain situations In fact, there are a number of bugs, some which can crash the game, and others which cause unpredictable results. At the time of this writing, Black Isle Studios has issued a beta patch to correct many problems, including the car bug, but the patch has introduced a new problem all of its own — it's incompatible with earlier save games, which means that after installing it, you'll have to start the game all over again After investing a great deal of time in the game, I decided to skip the patch and completed it with only a few minor interruptions and annoyances, but I suspect many gamers won't be quite so tolerant.

Is *Fallout 2* worth it? Definitely. From top to bottom, all of the best parts of the original game have returned for the better, and the deeper story line, flexible playing style, and attention to character development will undoubtedly leave roleplaying fans grinning from ear to ear

Todd Vaughn

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

89%

HIGHS: Deep character development, large gameworld, challenging quests.

LOWS: Numerous bugs; the game has a sluggish starting pace.

BOTTOM LINE: If you value character development, old-fashioned gameplay, and a good plot, this game delivers on all counts.

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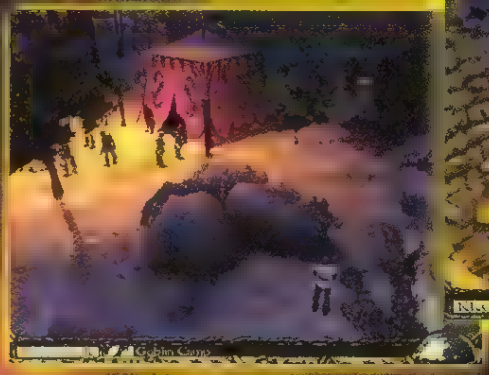

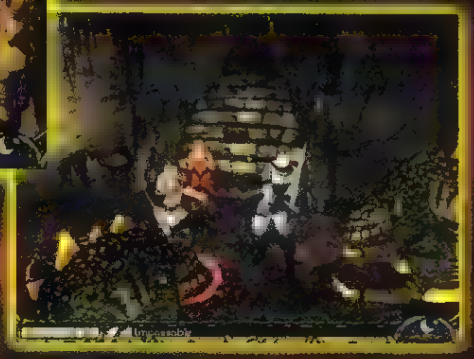

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European Air War

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

CATEGORY Simulation DEVELOPER MicroProse PUBLISHER MicroProse, (510) 864-4550, *www.microprose.com* REQUIRED Win95, 4x CD-ROM drive, P133MHz (with 3D video card)/P166MHz (software only); 32MB RAM, SVGA video card, 50MB HD space WE RECOMMEND P233MHz; 64MB RAM; Direct3D-compatible video card, 240MB HD space joystick and/or rudder pedals MULTI PLAYER OPTIONS Serial/Null Modem, Modem (28.8), IPX; TCP/IP, Maximum players: 8, Free Internet play (Options for HEAT and Mplayer are listed, but game is not yet supported)

European Air War's outstanding gameplay and wealth of features make it the current leader of the WWII simulation crop.

For flight sim fans who long to re-live the classic era of World War Two air combat, the last few years must have seemed like some sort of retribution for an unknown transgression. While jet fighter aficionados were treated to an almost endless supply of cutting edge sims, gamers who craved the intensity of WWII dogfighting saw pitifully few WWII era games released — so few, in fact, that it almost seemed as if developers had given up entirely on the genre.

But now the drought has ended: in less than a month, three new WWII flight sims hit store shelves, and leading the pack is MicroProse's *European Air War*. Actually, I'm a little presumptuous in crowning *EAW* the champ; deadline constraints meant I could take only a cursory glance at its two main competitors, Jane's *WWII Fighters* and Microsoft's *Combat Flight Simulator*. But no matter how good those sims are, you'll still want to add *EAW* to your flight sim library, thanks to an unmatched array of aircraft and campaign modes, outstanding flight physics, and numerous options to tweak the action to your liking.

***EAW*'s highest resolution is only 640 x 480, but it's more than enough to suspend your disbelief, especially running in Direct3D or Glide mode. Those planes sure are pretty!**

EAW's strongest suit is undoubtedly its line up of aircraft. Twenty fighters and fighter bombers are modeled, with variants of all the classics: five Messerschmitt 109s and 110s, two Focke-Wolf 190s, two P-51s, two P-47s, two P-38s, three Spitfires, and two Typhoons, not to mention the steadfast Hawker Hurricane Mk 1 and the hard-hitting Tempest Mk V. About the only fighter that isn't here is the Me-163 Komet, but as most World War Two aviation buffs know, it was more a deathtrap than a serious threat anyway.

The flight physics are accurately modeled for all the planes, from the powerful torque effect of the Bf109 and incredible roll rate of the Fw190A-89 to the tendency of the carburetors in Spitfires and Hurricanes to cut out in negative G situations. Of course, beginners can choose to turn off things like stalls, spins, blackouts and redouts, and gun jams, but even if you're a beginner, you should try your hand at flying with the bulk of the realism settings activated, once you score a kill and get home safely in that mode, you'll never want or need to go back to simpler flight dynamics.

Like any great combat simulation, *EAW* lets you sign up for the long haul of a campaign: you can fly as a British or German pilot in 1940, 1943, and 1944, and as an American in 1943 and 1944. Mission types include fighter sweeps, bomber interception, bomber escort and interdiction (ground attacks), but occasionally you'll have to scramble from your barracks to beat off surprise raids by the enemy. For fast action, options to design Single Missions or fly Quick Start sorties (based on the last Single Mission you flew) are available to get you in the air with minimal fuss.

EAW does commit a few sins of omission — no gun camera, no way to set trim (much needed on long flights), no tutorial, and no map zoom, and no graphics resolutions higher than 640x480 (nevertheless, it looks great). These are minor gripes, though; the only real question mark in single player mode is the pilot AI. Actually, the AI for enemies is very good, especially when

The terrain _European Air War_ features true three-dimensional trees and buildings and adds a real "you are there" feel — especially when compared to the flat "mural" terrain in _Combat Flight Simulator_.

A total of eight campaigns are included in _European Air War_ if you count all the sides you can fight for, and plane availability and mission types will change as the war progresses.

http://pcgn.com

set to the highest difficulty level, the problems lie in the behavior of your wingmen. Often you'll return to base to learn that you were the only one who scored any kills, leaving you to wonder just what your buddies were doing up there — and when you *do* check to see what they're doing, you'll be dismayed to find them committing egregious mistakes like failing to release drop tanks before engaging enemy fighters. Luckily, they'll at least follow your requests to drop tanks, come to your aid, or attack your target.

European Air War features the full suite of multi player options that you'd expect to find in a first-rate sim (connections via modem, serial, LAN, or the Internet, etc.) but when it comes to execution in these multi-player modes, *EAW* falls short of expectations.

Modem to modem games are the most flawed because the connection is stupidly broken at mission's end or even if you leave the chat screen to adjust difficulty settings, but all multi-player missions share some common headaches. You can't accelerate time or jump to the next encounter in multi player games — understandable when facing human opponents, but worthless in co-op missions where you face only artificial intelligence-controlled enemies. An option to decide how close enemies should be at the start of a mission would ensure more time is spent in combat and less in getting there.

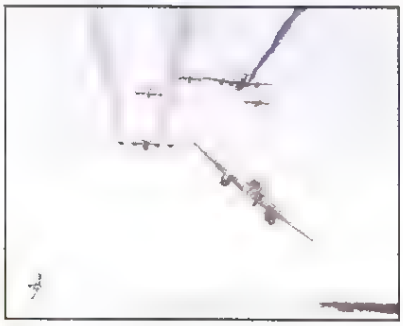
Although the manual suggests hitting targets of opportunity after completing the primary objective, that chance is sometimes scotched in multi-player because the program arbitrarily ends the mission. After a friend and I finished destroying a supply train, for instance, we set out to tangle with nearby bandits — but before we could reach them, the mission ended.

Finding fellow *EAW* pilots for remote play can be frustrating, too. The multi-player menu features options for play on Mplayer and HEAT, but neither service supported the game even a month after it shipped. Microsoft has welcomed *EAW* onto its Internet Gaming Zone, but apparently few *EAW* owners think of going to a Microsoft site to play a MicroProse game. I never saw more than 20 players in the *EAW* section of the Zone. Even when *EAW* arrives on Mplayer and HEAT, though, the game's spotty Internet performance means the experience might not be happy: the game crashed constantly both on the Zone and in peer-to-peer games, and "warping" of aircraft makes lining up a shot a nightmare.

These multi player shortcomings are disappointing, but luckily there's so much excitement and fun to be found in the single-player modes that most gamers will have their hands full until the inevitable patch arrives. Make no mistake: *European Air War* is one of the best WWII air combat sims to come down the pike in a long, long time. Hopefully we won't have to wait so long for the next generation of WWI flight sims, but if we do, we at least have a game as excellent as this one to tide us over.

Stephen Poole

MicroProse says that *EAW* can support up to 256 planes in a single mission, but it doesn't take nearly that many to create truly awe-inspiring battles — especially when the flak's heavy and the enemy's closing in fast.



No, it's not realistic, but you should try flying with no cockpit at least once so you can fully enjoy the results of your handiwork.

What Was and What Might Have Been

The Single Mission builder in *European Air War*, though adequate, doesn't feature specific historical missions or the "what if?" scenarios many flight sim fans love. Should MicroProse decide to release add-on missions at a later date, here are a few suggestions that could make for some interesting — and challenging — additions to the *EAW* experience.

Allied Mission One: Ploesti Redux

Although the name Ploesti conjures images of the ill-fated raid by B-24 Liberators on 1 April 1943 that cost the USAAF 55 bombers and nearly 450 men killed or missing in action, there were many subsequent strikes against the Romanian oil fields. This scenario is based on an attack that took place in 1944 in which 46 P-38s raided Ploesti armed with 1000lb. bombs; more than half were shot down by enemy fighters before delivering their payloads. Can you hit the target and still make it home in one piece?

Allied Mission Two: Six a Day Keeps the Jerries at Bay

On 6 August 1944, Major George Preddy, Jr. became the only American pilot in Europe to down six planes in a day (William Shomo pulled off the same feat in the Pacific theater in 1945). Preddy's P-51 outclassed the six Me-109s he brought down, but it was his skill and marksmanship that were responsible for the incredible achievement — and trying to duplicate it would challenge even great PC pilots.

Axis Mission One: Flight of the Crazed Dove

Rudolf Hess, accomplished pilot and second in line after Herman Goering to succeed Adolf Hitler, was determined to make peace with the British before Germany's invasion of the USSR. Acquiring a modified Me-110 he set out to cross the English Channel and parachute onto the Scottish estate of the Duke of Hamilton (the first man to fly over Mount Everest). Chased by a Spitfire and hindered by foul weather, Hess reached his destination only to be arrested and imprisoned till war's end. As Hess, you'd fly with limited ammo (Hess carried none) and might face more than one bandit along the way.

Axis Mission Two: A Finger in the Dike

On 16 May 1943, 19 British Lancasters armed with specially designed "bouncing bombs" set out on the now-famous Dambuster raid that succeeded in smashing the Moehne dam and flooding the West Ruhr valleys. The result: more than 100 factories and 25 bridges were destroyed (more than 20 other bridges were seriously damaged), and huge numbers of livestock and nearly 1300 people died in the deluge. As a German pilot, your efforts to stop the raid will be hampered by being forced to fly at extremely low altitudes.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

89%

HIGHS: Lots of planes and campaigns; great flight physics; stellar interface; tons of options.

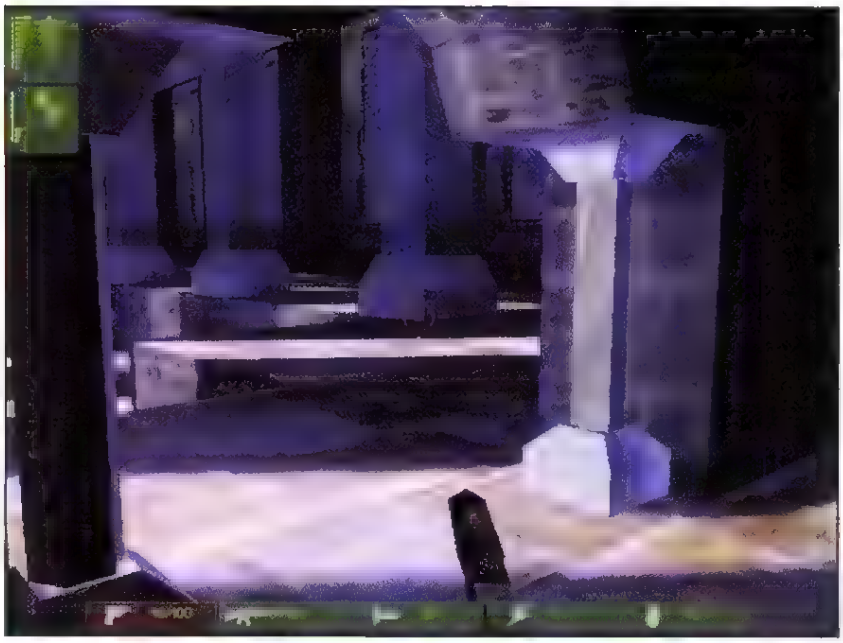
LOWS: Multi-player support needs improvement; several other features and options are absent.

BOTTOM LINE: Buy this even if you plan on getting another WWII air combat game; it's that good.

Vigilance

CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER: Segasoft PUBLISHER: Segasoft, (888) SEGASOFT, *www.segasoft.com* REQUIRED Win95, Quad speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 133 (with supported 3D card)/Pentium 166 (software only), 32MB RAM, 500MB hard-drive space WE RECOMMEND 3Dfx based 3D card, Pentium II, 64MB RAM, Ultra-33 or Ultra SCSI hard drive MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS TCP/IP, LAN, Max num players, 16

Clunky code and a bevy of bugs plague what would otherwise be an enjoyable mix of *Sin* and *Rainbow Six*.



Pretty light sourcing and realistic surroundings make *Vigilance* a potentially captivating title.

Comprised of some of the very best operatives the world has to offer, SION, a top secret, multi-national anti-terrorist organization, aims to put a stop to senseless violence worldwide. Good for them! You take charge of SION in *Vigilance*, a new shooter in the growing anti-terrorist genre. It sounds like a syndicated, late-night action show — you know, the kind whose plot is a thinly veiled excuse for guns and explosions — and so it's perfect action game fodder. When you start to play it, however, you'll notice that *Vigilance* is *not* a perfect shooter.

You choose one of a gaggle of agents, each sporting his or her own special abilities; some can take more damage than others, some offer "sniper mode" for *all* of the weapons (most agents only get sniper mode with a sniper rifle), others score more damage with certain weapons.

The game interface is very *Quake*-like, the major exceptions being that it defaults to a third-person viewpoint and the way it handles weapons and inventory. The first thing to do is switch to first-person; aiming and maneuvering are awkward in third-person.

The sniper rifle lets you get up close and personal without being spotted

You use the same interface to handle both weapons and inventory. You're allowed to carry a total of ten items, and you can rearrange your inventory to your heart's desire. There are more than twenty weapons available, from familiar assault rifles, pistols, grenade and rocket launchers to sci-fi weapons like a railgun and a "sonic lance," and you'll also have to shuffle inventory items like top secret data CDs and the inevitable key cards.

The terrorist premise and differently skilled agents may spark some *Rainbow Six* comparisons, but the in-game action bears more resemblance to conventional shooters like *Sin*. You pick up weapons, armor, and health packs as you go; and the levels, though visually resembling realistic environments, have the unrealistically labyrinthine quality of more standard first person shooters. Your enemies are human throughout, and feature the area-specific damage that has become one of the action genre's vogue features this year.

Vigilance dumps a whopping five hundred megabytes of data onto your hard drive — but doesn't seem to cache much of it in RAM, and users have a 400MB swap file to deal with. Even with 64MB, the game freezes and seeks the hard drive over and over again during play. The game continues to accept mouse and keyboard input while the screen's frozen, so when it unfreezes, you're usually in an unpredictable location facing in a random direction. By the time you get over the disorientation, you're often dead. To make matters worse, you can't save within a level. It's an unforgivable omission; the maps are big, and the levels are long; even if you survive the freezing problems, you still have the bad guys to contend with. Getting killed when you're near the end of a mission is maddening.

A handful of minor bugs, such as the occasional flashing texture and the tendency of blood to float in midair after someone gets shot, give me the feeling that *Vigilance*, like so many other games these days, was released unfinished. Not surprisingly, the developer promises a patch which will supposedly add a "save anywhere" feature and smooth out the gameplay. But in the meantime, this is not a viable purchase. A bit of playtesting and a *lot* of optimizing would have made *Vigilance* an enjoyable game, but as it stands, it's just not up to scratch.

— Joel Durham Jr

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

45%

HIGHS: Cool premise; lots of weapons and enjoyable gameplay...

LOWS: ...spoiled by a lack of a mid-level save, bad code, and lots of bugs.

BOTTOM LINE: If Segasoft actually finishes this game, it may be worth a look.

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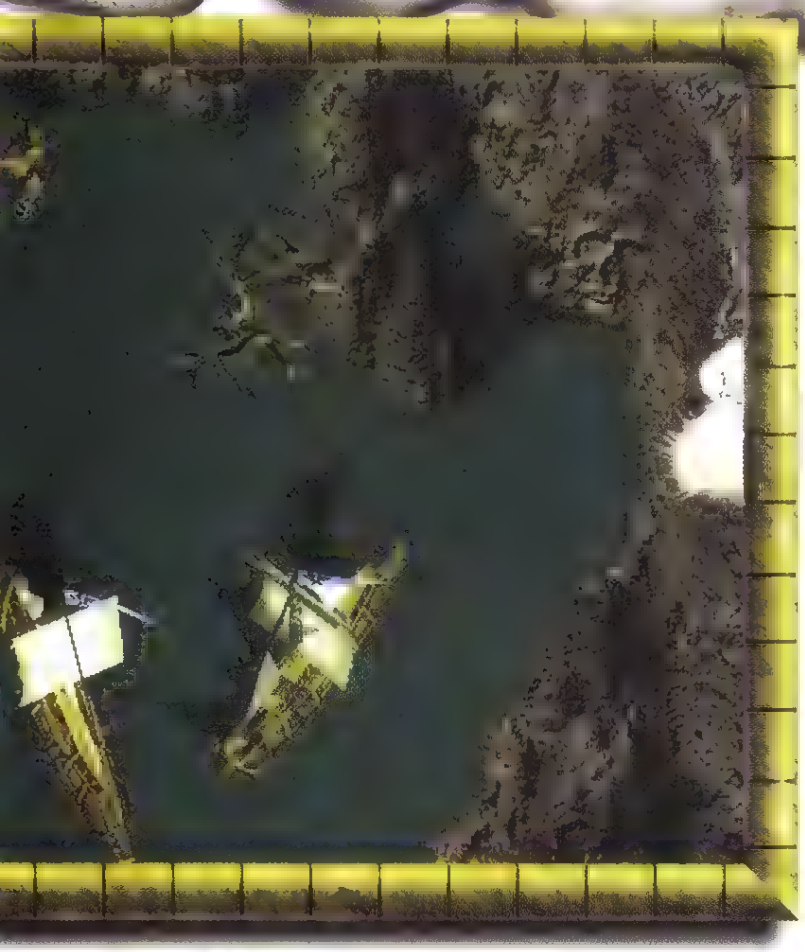

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Heretic II

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER Raven Software PUBLISHER Activision, (310) 255 2050, *www.activision.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Double-speed CD ROM drive, Pentium 133, 32MB RAM WE RECOMMEND Pentium 233, 64MB RAM, OpenGL-compliant 3D accelerator MULTI PLAYER OPTIONS IPX, TCP/IP, Maximum players 16 (Four for cooperative play)

With sparkly graphics and frenetic gameplay, Raven's third-person shooter pours out the medieval mayhem in gallon jugs.

Whenever id Software builds a 3D engine, you can always rely on Raven Software to produce a kick-ass action game with it. *Doom*'s satanic hallways were transformed into the medieval nightmare worlds of *Hexen* and *Heretic*, the budding *Quake* engine was used for *Hexen II*, and now, the refined *Quake II* engine has been put through its paces to deliver the convincing world of *Heretic II*.

Heretic II picks up just after our elfish hero, Corvus, has defeated D'Sparil, the Serpent Rider, and has been subsequently banished into the chaotic realm known as the Outer Worlds. After years of schlepping about in this demon-populated land without much purpose, Corvus discovers a portal that can take him back to the land of the living. Anxious for a few brews and a night with some Elven cuties, Corvus steps through, hoping to pop out in his hometown of SilverSpring.

But Corvus is shafted once again as he steps into a ravaged version of his home land, where rabid rats and crazed townspeople begin attacking him in droves. Seems that *something* has wrought a hideous plague onto his brethren, and just about everyone has gone mad. Now Corvus must fight his way out of the town and find a cure for the plague, which has infected him as well.

While *Hexen II*'s look and feel was a little too similar to that of the original *Quake*, Raven has bestowed this game with enough extra features and technological razzle dazzle to push it far beyond the typical *Quake II* mold. The most noticeable difference from Raven's previous titles is that the game is played entirely from a third-person perspective. This is no shoddy *Tomb Raider* rip-off, though — the action is fast, responsive, and Corvus can run circles around Eidos' top-heavy mascot.

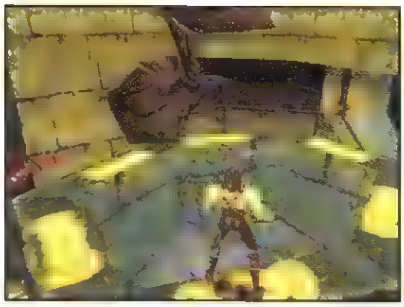
And unlike *Tomb Raider*, this is not a solitary adventure where climbing and exploring are the focus of the game, with combat as an afterthought. In *Heretic II*, a major emphasis is placed on combat, and thanks to its intelligent targeting system, it's easy to mow down

Baffled beyond words, Corvus wonders just *how* he got into the astronomy room in Bethesda's *Redguard*. Freaky

Corvus takes a second out of his busy schedule to admire a pair of lovely dragon statues flanking the entrance to an enemy castle. The scenery in *Heretic II* is not as drab as in other 3D shooters.

Hey, how's it goin'? This iguana-guy isn't interested in chit-chat — he'd much rather feast on your flesh, and those cute pointy ears.

http://pc.gn.com

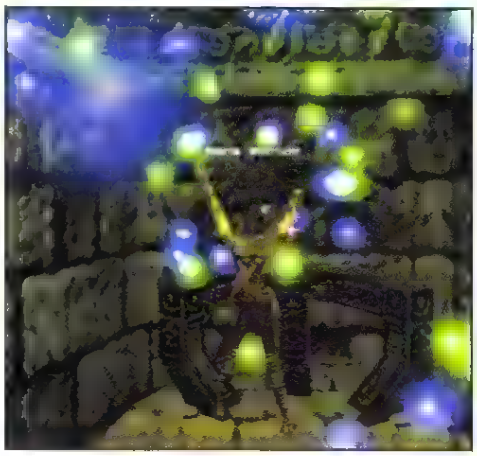


The winged beasties found in *Heretic II* can be extremely deadly — one good hit, and they can lop off your head.

After swimming through the depths of his hometown sewer, Corvus surfaces inside a warehouse.

hordes of drooling, afflicted townspeople and shrieking harpies. The camera system is also admirably programmed, keeping tabs on the action without a hitch - and that's saying something when you consider that Corvus has jumping ability that would put Mary Lou Retton to shame, and can make enormous leaps to cliffs and rocky outcroppings. Equip your long staff, and you can launch yourself even further — it's obvious that Corvus was a pole vaulting champion back in junior high. Fortunately, the jumping puzzles don't subscribe to the tedious, pixel-perfect requirements of the *Tomb Raider* games, though one or two of the tougher jumps may require a little practice. Quick somersaults and forward rolls can be assigned to "double taps," or pressing the same button twice in rapid succession. Along with running and jumping, you can also climb ropes, showing off some cool physics — pushing the attack button while grabbing onto a rope will rock you back and forth, allowing you to dramatically leap off at the apex of your jump.

Heretic II, like its predecessors, doesn't really have 'ammo' *per se*; the system is based on magical material called mana. There's offensive and defensive mana, along with combo mana that lets you dish out the hurt in an even more spectacular fashion. If you're not finding enough mana spread around to suit your fancy, just locate a Shrine - glowing pedestals hidden throughout the game that give you a mana supercharge.



No, it's not *the Quickening* — you're just loading up on the blue and green stuff at a Mana shrine.

As the game progresses and the story unfolds, Corvus keeps track of his objectives in a logbook. All puzzles and quests are tied in with the story; there's no meaningless key-searching here. The game's pacing is solid, complemented by a series of in-game cutscenes, where Corvus quips with NPCs or trash talks with the game's bosses. Some of the dialog is a little forced (most of the enemies suffer from Breathy Programmer Syndrome), but Raven gets an A for effort - when you press a button or reach a certain objective, there's usually a quick and dirty cutscene showing the outcome.

Visually, *Heretic II* is one of the best looking *Quake*-based games out there right now. The 16-bit color palette eliminates the murky browns and grays we've come to expect, and colored lighting is used effectively. It appears that the Raven boys spent most of their time on the game's dazzling special effects. Most of Corvus' spells are beautiful to behold, especially when in their powered-up modes. Some of the slickest effects come when you encounter a light shrine - two shining globes circle around you and light your path, and the rainstorm spell creates a red cloud that floats overhead and blasts the hell out of surrounding baddies. It's *all* good.

Heretic II also breaks free of *Quake II*'s painfully limited animation system by using a segmented model technique. Some of the changes are subtle, when Corvus stands on uneven ground, he readjusts his stance to stay centered. Some of the changes are more obvious - it's easy to slice off enemies' arms and legs in the single player mode, *and* in DeathMatch. In any case, the animation is nicely done — you can even see our hero's fingers flex as he pulls himself up onto a crate.

Heretic II installs a copy of *GameSpy Lite* in your Windows Start menu, so you can actually get Internet games up and running straight out of the box. And it's definitely worth a try - Death Matching with the various magical spells is a real hoot, especially when you use the famous *Morph Ovum* spell on a buddy (it turns 'em turns into a chicken). The only bummer is that *GameSpy* queries servers running the *Heretic II* demo - and you can't connect and play against them.

Of course, *Heretic II* isn't perfect. Sometimes Corvus will get stuck in a wall, and the only way to get out is to use the "no clipping" cheat code, or restart the level. Load times can be grating, especially after dying, though they're not nearly as bad as *Sin*'s interminable waits. And oy, those typo graphical errors - somebody at Activision should've checked the in-game text, since I caught a number of misspellings and other embarrassing gaffes that would make any grammar prof flip out. Aside from that, the game runs relatively clean, and I encountered only one crash, at the end of a cutscene (a problem that I couldn't get to recur).

All in all, *Heretic II* looks great, plays extremely well, and offers a new and interesting 'perspective' on Raven's typical brood of fantasy themed shooters. If you're a fan of the *Heretic* or *Hexen* games - or just need a good third-person shooter to satisfy your action lust — you certainly can't go wrong with this. Nicely done, Raven.

Colin Williamson

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

89%

HIGHS: New and interesting gameplay elements; funky magical visual effects.

LOWS: Some annoying load times; Corvus gets stuck sometimes; and there are lot's of typoes.

BOTTOM LINE: A great-looking action romp through the familiar world of *Heretic*.

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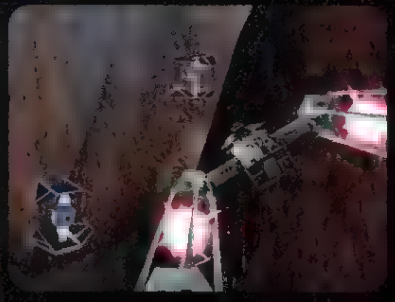

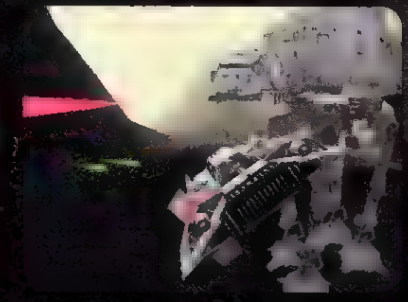

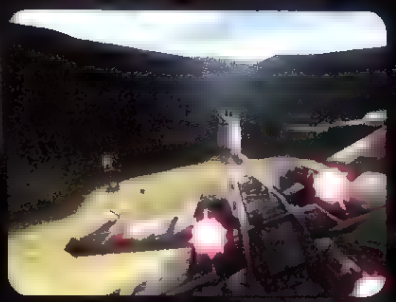

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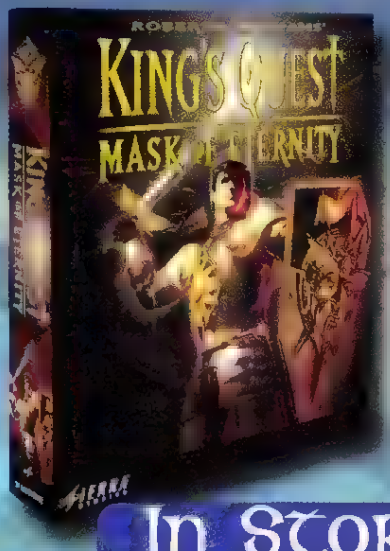

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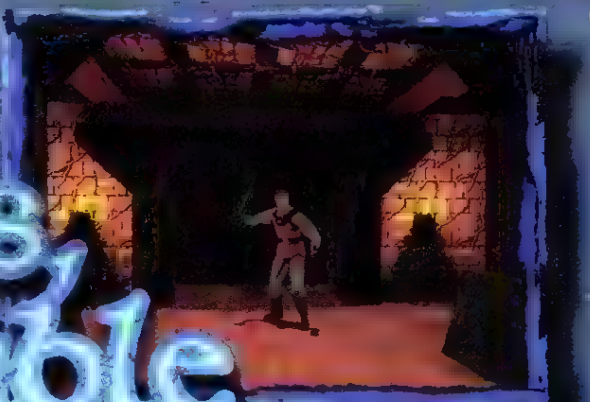

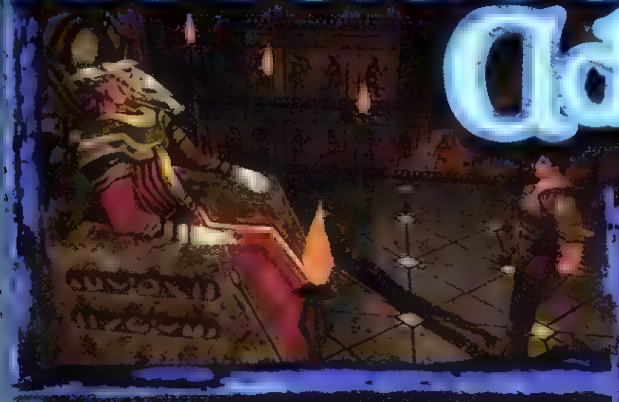

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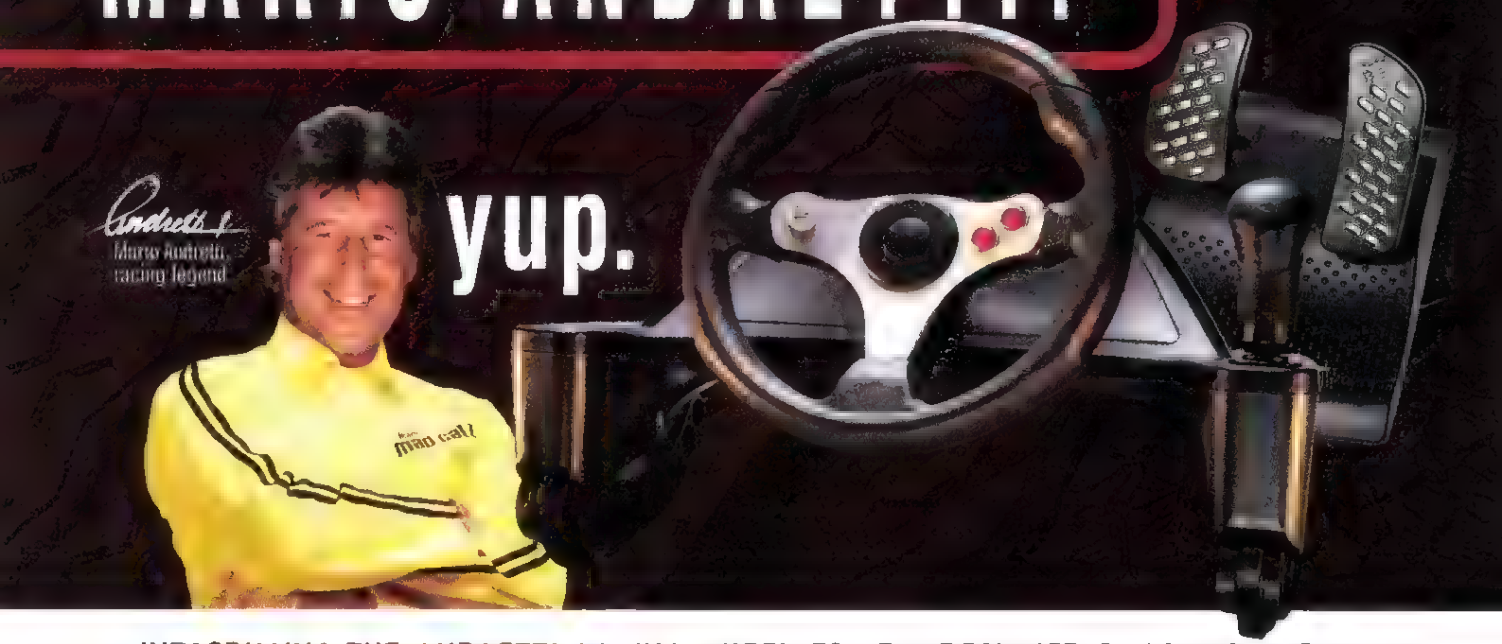

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Future Cop L.A.P.D.

CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER Electronic Arts PUBLISHER Electronic Arts, (800) 245-4525, *www.ea.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 150, 32MB RAM 60MB hard-drive space WE RECOMMEND Pentium 233, 64MB RAM, Direct3D compatible accelerator Gamepad MULTIPLAYER OPTIONS Split-screen, Serial/Null Modem; Modem 28.8, IPX, TCP/IP, Maximum players 2

Electronic Arts dishes out a solid, futuristic blastfest loaded to the gills with big things that go boom!

It's the future, and Los Angeles has degraded into a smoggy trashheap of illegal drugs, rampaging mutants, and super villains with coo. names who enjoy clubbing baby seals and taunting the police To keep law and order, the L.A.P.D. has created a bipedal, ass-stomping robot loaded with enough firepower to level a city, and lets it loose on evildoers everywhere And of course, you're the one driving the thing

As a pseudo heir to Electronic Arts' long running Strike series (*Desert Strike*, *Jungle Strike*, *Urban Strike*, and *Nuclear Strike*) it's probably no surprise that *Future Cop* is all about action and short on story, where mission based blast fests are little more than an excuse for lots and lots of visual pyrotechnics; but like those earlier Strike games, it works. A fairly straightforward port from the PlayStation version, *Future Cop* doesn't really break any molds, but it does deliver on the adrenaline rush with eye popping visuals and non stop action. Played from a third person three quarter isometric perspective, the camera programming is somewhat intelligent — though your viewpoint occasionally shifts behind a wall, you can keep tabs on the action most of the time. As your robot tromps through the post-apocalyptic L.A. battlefields, you'll notice a handy dandy auto-targeting feature, where a red laser sight draws a line to the nearest baddie You can lay into the opposing forces with a standard Vulcan chaingun, a series of missile attacks, or a mini-nuke that gracefully arcs through the air and sends shock-waves slamming through whatever is in its way

When you get into an area with lots of humans, the camera shifts into "crowd control mode" so you can mow down fields of baddies from a close-up view.

Though most of the enemy forces are robot drones, turrets, or large metallic vehicles, you'll occasionally encounter a large group of humans, running around on foot. Here, the game shifts into "crowd control mode," where the camera zooms in close as you slaughter dozens of squishy Homo sapiens in a scant few seconds. You'll also get a sick thrill from blasting a guard tower and watching a flaming enemy soldier fly out of the explosion, screaming bloody murder. Through it all, your female navigator points out mission objectives and compliments you with *Duke*-ish one-liners whenever you nail an enemy. And at random spots, the bosses (who are *all* members of the Bad Actors' Guild) will verbally taunt you while they try to pound you to a pulp.

Though you'll spend most of your time in the robot's walking mode, you're able to transform into a high-speed hovercraft Movement is a good deal quicker when in this form, but it's also incredibly slippery and frustrating, so you'll probably want to stay on two feet

Running under Direct 3D, *Future Cop* looks very solid, with no visible seaming or texture distortion. The levels are nicely textured with a good use of color (despite the dreary atmosphere), and the explosion and weapon effects are simply over-the-top. Network play is also included, and features a surprisingly decent two-player split-screen mode, where two players can go at the single-player missions side-by-side or play in a head-to-head base-infiltration mode

The split-screen mode in the game features a *CTF*-style game where you have to infiltrate your enemy's base. As shown here, taking out opposing turrets is pretty cool.

Future Cop does have a few problems. Sometimes the computer targets an enemy who's located behind a wall, and you have to change targets manually to avoid wasting precious ammo on a cement barrier. Transforming into your alternate form can also be a pain, requiring you to hit the *use* key and the *change target* key simultaneously. The option to map the action to its own key or gamepad button would have been nice we're not exactly limited to a PlayStation pad here. And lastly, the game is just a little *too* short, reaching its conclusion all too quickly

Sure, *Future Cop L.A.P.D.* may be a PlayStation port, but you can't deny the fact that it looks good, runs fast, and plays extremely well. And considering the fact that you can pick it up for a paltry twenty bucks, that's good enough reason for most folks to consider buying a copy on their next trip to the software store

Colin Williamson

PC GAMER TRIAL VERDICT

76%

HIGHS: Great blasting action. Solid graphics and decent multi-player modes.

LOWS: A handful of targeting problems; some of the acting is pretty cheesy.

BOTTOM LINE: If you're into action titles, and you're on a budget, *Future Cop* won't disappoint.

Space Bunnies Must Die

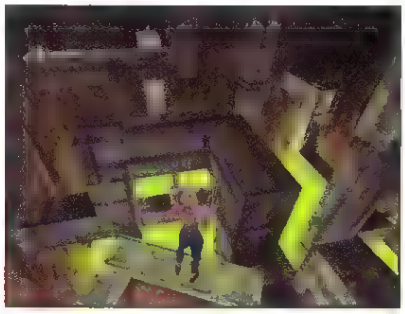
CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER Jinx PUBLISHER Ripcord Games, (888) 797-5867 *www.spacebunnies.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 166, 32MB RAM, 142MB hard-drive space, Windows-compatible sound card WE RECOMMEND Eight-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 200, 64MB RAM, Direct3D compatible 3D card MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS n/a, You can't drag your friends into this

Memo to Allison Huxter: You are *not* Lara Croft, and your polygonal hardbody *won't* sell this cheesy *Tomb Raider* clone.

Groan. This game could have been good. Done right, this third-person, action filled satire of Midwestern country folk, in the style of a cheesy, drive-in B-movie, had the potential to be funny and entertaining. Unfortunately it wasn't done right.

Space Bunnies Must Die pits waitress-bimbo Allison Huxter against an endless swarm of overgrown alien rabbits who've kidnapped her equally bimbesque sister Jocelyn. Allison will have to jump, dive, and shoot through the bunnies' mountain hideout to collect some sort of scepter from each of ten levels; when she nabs them all, she can go battle the Bunny King to win her sister back.

Controlling Allison is amazingly similar to controlling Lara Croft in the *Tomb Raider* games. She runs, walks, jumps, dives, rolls, does backflips, auto-aims, shoots, and even *looks* like a bland version of Lara, complete with pointy chest and twin pistols. The third-person camera is a tiny bit better than *Tomb Raider*'s — you rarely lose sight of Allison or her enemies — but there are a couple of enraging control glitches to be wary of. When Allison's foot hits a slanted surface that she's unable to climb, she immediately drops to a crouch for no apparent reason. She's unable to walk slowly up or down slanted walkways, and since walking slowly is the only way to approach an edge without tumbling over, that flaw frequently induces needless death.



Oh joy, another jumping to the exact pixel puzzle. Kill me, please, kill me now!

As you make your way into the bunny base, the first thing you'll notice is the boring, repetitive textures. All of the walls are brown rocks; all of the bunny-made structures are gray, and there isn't much in the way of ambient decor as you're wandering through the endless tunnels — or, for that matter, when you're struggling to get past the ridiculous quantity of console-style jumping, ducking, and timing your movement-to-get-past-lethal-things puzzles. You'll die a lot, and the stupid save-game method doesn't help much: rather than allowing you to save anywhere, you must locate occasional "save beacons," as if you were playing a console game. What a load of rubbish.

Adding to the dullness is the weaponry. Allison carries the same two pistols throughout the entire game. Her default ammunition is weak, but she'll come across several different types of superior ammo. Unfortunately they don't have noticeably different effects, each one seems to kill bunnies in two or three shots, and the visuals that distinguish each ammunition type's effects are bland. The weapon/inventory interface is about as intuitive as an income tax return; you use the TAB and Q keys to cycle through pages of 3x3 grids, the positions of which correspond to the keys in your keyboard's numerical pad.

Music plays a big part in this game, sort of. The in-game ambient music is suitably cheesy, perfectly tailored to fit the prevailing '50s sci-fi flick motif, and it interactively changes tempo to fit the situation. The game even comes with a soundtrack CD full of the kind of old rock hits you can hear on any "home of rock 'n' roll" station. But get this: Allison can dance to the music to hypnotize the enemy bunnies. Seriously. Even as they're shooting at her, she can holster her pistols and boogie-woogie, and after a few seconds they'll start dancing, too. Then she has a few seconds to whip out her guns and shoot them.

Not only is this bizarre, but it's totally pointless. It's heck of a lot easier just to shoot the bunnies straight off, so you can get back to the business of falling off ledges and trying to find save crystals. Actually, you could take my point to its logical conclusion and just say that it's even easier — and smarter — just to *avoid buying this game*!

Joel Durham Jr.

Lava, lava, everywhere! Tons of jumping puzzles, and not nearly enough save game beacons, means you'll retrace your steps until you think you're going insane

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Pokes fun at trailer trash.

LOWS: Boring scenery, boring weapons, frustrating levels, bad control bugs, and foolish save game method make this a maddening experience.

BOTTOM LINE: *Space Bunnies Must* not be purchased. Trust us.

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Combat Flight Simulator

CATEGORY Simulation DEVELOPER Microsoft PUBLISHER Microsoft, *www.microsoft.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 133, 16MB RAM, 200MB hard drive space, Windows-compatible sound card WE RECOMMEND Pentium II 400, 64MB RAM, 3Dfx Voodoo graphics- or Voodoo2- based accelerator, 400MB hard-drive space; Joystick; Throttle, Rudder pedals MULTI PLAYER OPTIONS Serial/Null Modem, Modem, 28.8, IPX, TCP/IP; Maximum players 8; Free Internet Service *www.zone.com*

While there's certainly no shortage of World War Two flight simulators this month, Microsoft's entry has one of the most respected pedigrees in all of computer simulations — *Flight Simulator*.

Flight simulation enthusiasts generally respect *Microsoft Flight Simulator* more than they actually enjoy it. That's because we can recognize the stunning achievements in flight and system modeling while wondering silently "Where's the fire button on this damn thing?" As a recreation of the sublime pleasure of civil aviation that is, the excitement of taking off, flying cross country for hours, and landing — it is unparalleled, but it's not what one would call thrilling.

It may have taken more than a decade to finally get that fire button on *Flight Simulator*, but it's there in spades with *Microsoft's Combat Flight Simulator: WWII Europe Series*; the only problem is the timing of its arrival forces it to compete head-on with MicroProse's *European Air War*, Jane's *WWII Fighters*, and SSI's *Luftwaffe Commander*. For the most part, *Combat Flight Simulator* (*CFS*) stands up very well against this formidable competition, and in many ways, it feels a lot like the revered Aces series from Dynamix, only with better flight models. It has a "zap me to the action" button and rigidly structured missions much like Aces.

As a whole, *CFS* is an uneven mix of the amazing and the drab. The front end and feature set, for instance, feel like boilerplate from the Acme Sim Company. Lifeless menus and merely adequate movies do little to hint at some of the wonders inside. Expected features like free flight, quick combat, training missions, single missions, canned campaigns, and multi-player don't hint that much new or interesting is ahead. Scenarios are offered for British, German, and American sides, and campaigns for British and German, but they are scripted and never feel dynamic and dangerous. Plus, there aren't enough of them, and the campaign is simply a string of missions. The only really novel element is the ability to slew your aircraft to any coordinate on the map. Since this is a *Flight Simulator* product, that means you can add any of your old (or future) scenery packs and even import custom aircraft, making it expandable in ways other combat sims only dream of.

Enemy artificial intelligence is pretty decent by and large, when set to the higher levels. Enemy planes will pull some pretty inventive maneuvers, though wings don't seem to coordinate as well as they should.

The second element that marks it as a member of the *Flight Simulator* family is the superb modeling. Six fighters and two variants are modeled, and on the most realistic setting each feels different and seems to fly to spec. I've never flown a Bf-109 or a Spitfire, but from what I've read, the characteristics modeled in *CFS* are dead on. You'll be fighting torque on the Mustang, sweating landings in the Spitfire, and rolling like a mother in a Fw-190. Of the three major WWII sims I flew this month, *CFS* just feels the most *right*.

It's a shame, then, that some of its other features feel less right. "Perception of speed" is a hard thing to gauge or quantify in a sim, but like many of its

Here comes the savior of England. A Spitfire soars over downtown London during the Battle of Britain. Along with the Hurricane, you can use to it chase off those pesky Hun

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The Planes of *Combat Flight Simulator*

Hawker Hurricane (British): England's workhorse early in the war, the Hurricane was a star player in the Battle of Britain. One of the last fabric-covered fighters, it is stable, sturdy, and easy-to-fly, though it pays for it in acceleration and climb. It sports eight .303 machine guns.

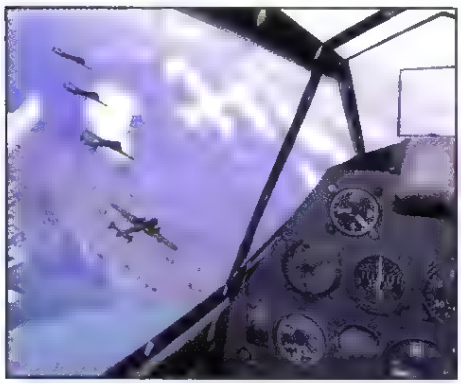
Supermarine Spitfire (British): The fast, agile hero of the RAF, the Spitfire was beloved by it pilots for its superb maneuverability, climbing rate, and turn radius. It takes some care to fly (even more to land), and the stick gets heavy when you fly too fast, but it pays off with a performance that can outclass the Bf109. The Mk I sports eight .303 guns, while the Mk IX has a combination of .50 caliber guns and 20-mm cannons.

P-47 Thunderbolt (USA): Like the Hurricane, it's easy to fly, and is fast and agile, but also has only a fair climbing rate and turn radius. It pays back these flaws with serious firepower (eight .50-caliber guns) and a rock-solid construction that can absorb a serious beating.

P-51 Mustang (USA): Its long range, high speeds, and high degree of agility make it a formidable aircraft, while massive torque and a light airframe make it a bear to handle. It's a tough plane to fly, but in a furball, its assets, and six .50-caliber guns, make you glad she's on your side.

Bf-109 (German): Messerschmitt's sleek, prickly plane was the scourge of England, and often of its pilots. While it is fast, agile, climbs well, and responds to a feather touch, it is also tough to land and definitely not the plane you want to put through high-G maneuvers. Its twin 20-mm cannon deal a solid blow.

Fw-190 (German): This Focke-Wulf is more manageable than the Bf-109, yet still offers good responsiveness and excellent speed and roll rates. It isn't much of a climber or turner, but it can fit twin 13mm machine guns and four 20mm cannon for devastating effect.



The cockpit has a good range of views, enabling you to eyeball all around the cockpit and take in the lovely, though flat, scenery.

more subjective features, I know it when I see it, and *CFS* doesn't have it. You never feel like you're going fast. I never saw the blur of terrain underneath me or felt the zip of a plane as it goes by. *European Air War* does this quite effectively, but *CFS* doesn't. This may have to do with the way it handles graphics. From medium to high altitudes the terrain looks phenomenal. It's actually better looking than anything currently on the market, and though it doesn't break up down low, the illusion goes out the window when you realize the terrain has no depth or detail. It is utterly flat and characterless, even the trees and some major towns and cities are dull. There are some modeled ground objects, including trees and buildings, but not many. The overall impression is of flying over a painting, so when you get down low, forget depth and distance perception. You'll be lucky if you don't run into those pretty textures.

This detail is confined to terrain objects and aircraft look good, but not awe inspiring. Jane's and MicroProse both did a better job on objects, while Microsoft wins the terrain award. Microsoft's production value is also better on the sound end, guns, explosions, engines, and other planes all sound terrific, and there are distinct sounds for each gun and engine. All this sheen is tough on your system, however. You can forget about it unless you have a 3D card, and even then performance is a real issue. Go take on a flight of B-17s and watch the frame rates go in the toilet.

There are some other curious lapses. The keyboard layout and view options get a medal for screwiness. F1 is usually straight-ahead view, right? Here, it drops you to the desktop help screen! (At least you can easily re-map the keyboard.) There are some external views, and the camera can be moved around, but there is no key to call up a specific angle, such as an enemy or side view. There's also no cockpit recorder. Cockpit views are well done, though, and the clear cockpit instrument overlay is the best I've encountered.

In the most vexing failing, there is no discernible wingman control. If my wingman was smart enough to attack one plane while I worked on the other, that wouldn't be too awful. But he isn't. Actually, artificial intelligence is pretty inconsistent. I found some enemies putting up a good fight and throwing some surprisingly sophisticated maneuvers, yet they never seemed to work well in tandem, and never took aggressive evasive action. Overall, though, the AI is enough to keep you hopping.

Combat Flight Simulator is a really promising first foray into combat flight for Microsoft. There are some rough spots to be smoothed, for certain, but strong and stable internet support via the Zone, excellent flight models, detailed (albeit flat) terrain, and a good mix of mission types make it one to keep on the hard drive. Like *Aces*, this is a sim to just sit back and enjoy again and again. It's not as sexy as *European Air War* or *WWII Fighters*, but it's a very different and entertaining kind of combat sim.

T. Liam McDonald

The Messerschmitt Bf109 plane is so fast, so sleek so... hard to fly. You can rack up a lot of kills in the Battle of Britain in this one, but it's also surprisingly vulnerable to hits.

Each cockpit is rendered in amazing detail and is fully interactive. The realistic view limitations on many planes may have you reaching for the clear cockpit view more often than not, however.

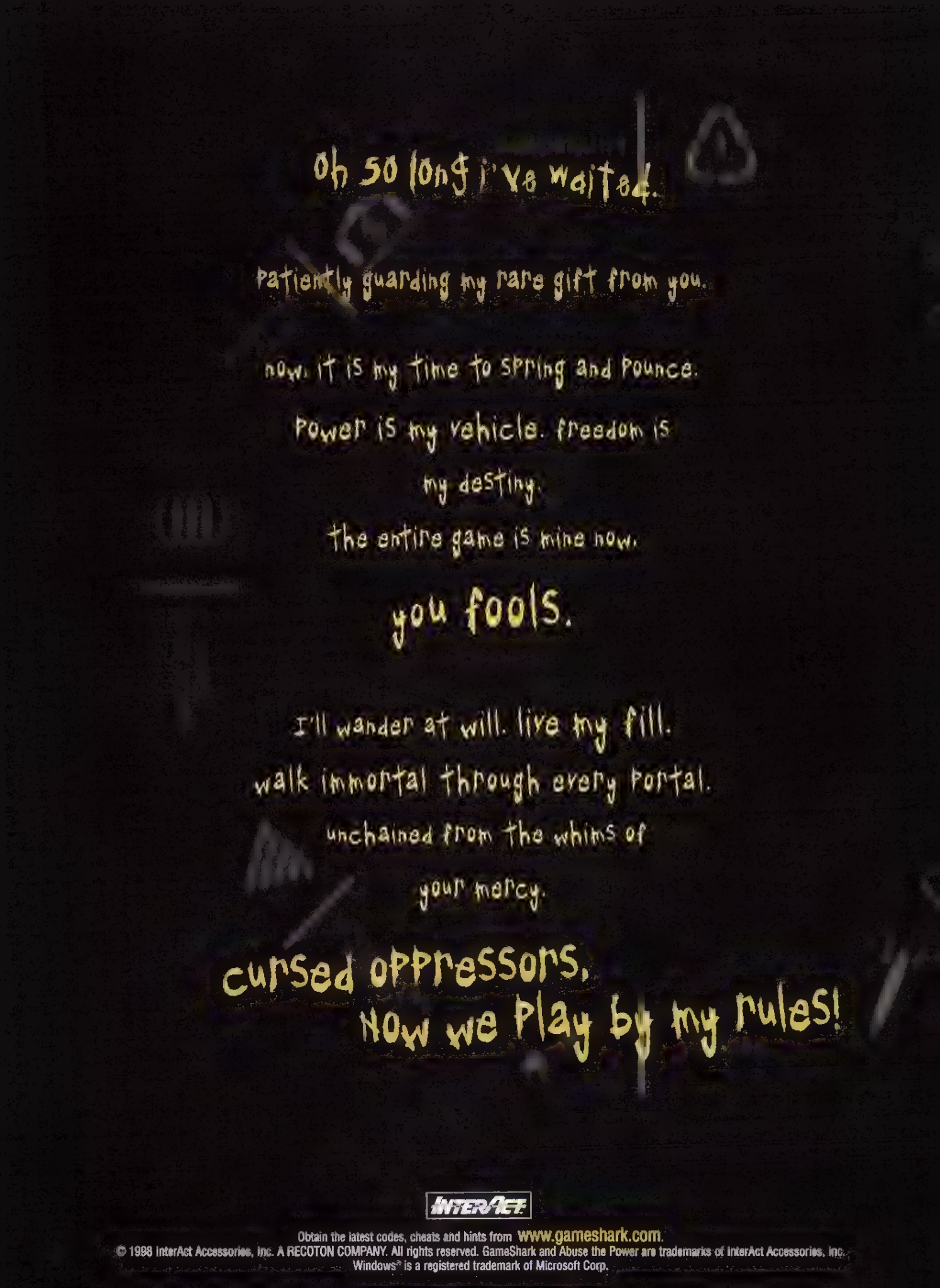
PC GAMER TRIAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Top-notch flight models. Engaging missions. Incredible terrain graphics from altitude.

85%

LOWS: Terrain graphics look flat down low. A real system hog. Canned campaign missions.

BOTTOM LINE: Excellent flight modeling and entertaining mix of missions make this a winner.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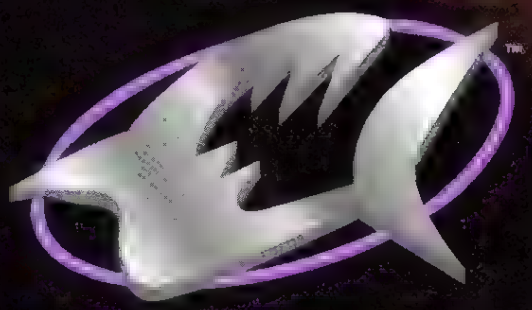

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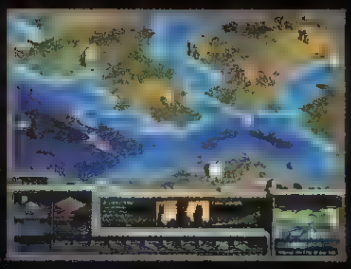

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KKND2 Krossfire

CATEGORY Real time strategy DEVELOPER Melbourne House PUBLISHER Beam Software, (425) 398 3051, *www.beamsoft.com* REQUIRED Win95, Quad-speed CD ROM drive Pentium 133, 16MB RAM, DirectX-compatible video card WE RECOMMEND Pentium 166, 32MB RAM MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS TCP/IP, LAN, Modem; Serial, Maximum players 8, Two CDs included one is required for each system in a multi player game

Surprisingly engrossing and well executed, the only thing dogging this RTS game is that everything it has to offer has already been done.

Back in the height of real time strategy gaming before the countless clones overwhelmed store shelves, an interesting little ditty called *Krush Kill 'N Destroy* (*KKND*) cultivated a small but rabid following. Pitting radiation-mutated surface dwellers against bomb shelter refugees in a battle for a post holocaust Earth, the game was original and fun.

Apparently, there's some sort of federal law that states that every successful game must spawn a sequel. And so now we have *KKND2 Krossfire*, which finds itself in the unfortunate position of having to make a dent in the genre after the release of the mega popular *StarCraft*, and just a couple of months before the much awaited Command & Conquer sequel *Tiberian Sun*.

KKND2 packs a lot of popular features into a standard real time strategy interface. A third race has been introduced, somewhat three dimensional terrain affects the strategy, unit trees and tech level upgrades keep things changing, waypoint assignments let you assign complex orders to each unit, and, once you've built the required base structures, you can even design your own units. Unfortunately, all of those features have been done before in *StarCraft*, *Total Annihilation*, *Age of Empires*, *Dark Reign*, and *Extreme Tactics*, respectively. They haven't, however, all been done in the same game.

If you've played any decent RTS title before, *KKND2* will already be familiar to you. You acquire and manage a resource (oil); you build a base consisting of resource management buildings, a factory, a barracks, and various support structures; you build infantry and vehicular units; you attack other bases and defend your own. Like other RTS games, the single player levels are adequate, offering some fun base-building missions and a handful of frustrating puzzle missions, but the game shows its true strength when you take on human opponents. The multi-player experience is just as frantic and fun as the best RTS games.

The three enemy forces, called the Survivors, (humans recently emerged from radiation shelters) the Evolved (surface dwelling, radiated human mutants) and the Series 9 (robots) have subtle differences that affect game strategy, but they're not nearly as diversified as the species in *StarCraft*. You can play each *KKND2* race with the same overall philosophy and your level of success will be much the same.

Your strategy is affected by the terrain: most units can fire down cliffs from higher elevations, but only artillery units can fire up them. Unit creation is also an interesting twist, implemented far better than it is in *Extreme Tactics*; you simply choose a base, weapons and extra features and start building. This is also where the three races show their biggest differences, as each has unique armament options.

The replayability of this title is substantial, especially if you've got a few friends to enjoy it with. If you're itching for a multi player match and can't rustle up opponents, *KKND2* packs a solo mode in which you face computer enemies. The artificial intelligence is startlingly good; set at a high skill level, PC opponents are really hard to beat (and the packaging swears they don't cheat). Further enhancing the replayability factor is an included mission editor. It's not very intuitive, but the help file is well written and friendly — a feature rarely found in a freebie.

KKND2's appeal will lie mostly with newcomers to the RTS genre. It's friendly and very accessible; and the manual is excellent, making *KKND2* far easier to get into than many other games. The graphics are crisp and bright, and the units' verbal responses to your orders are entertaining without being intrusive. Hopefully, this game will find a foothold in the post-*StarCraft* RTS market.

Joel Durham Jr

The graphics in *KKND2* are as sharp and detailed as we've come to expect in RTS games — too bad the game just isn't that original.

The enemy AI is quite good; in skirmish games, sometimes PC opponents trash your base when you're just getting started building. Doh!

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

80%

HIGHS: Plenty of depth, nice graphics, great documentation, and a rare lack of bugs.

LOWS: It's all been done before; the different races aren't all that different.

BOTTOM LINE: Although *KKND2* offers nothing new, it's still a solid title for new RTS fans.

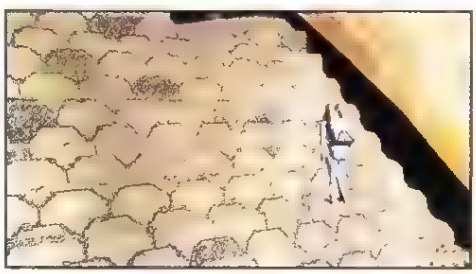
Cydonia — Mars: The First Manned Mission

CATEGORY Puzzle adventure DEVELOPER Aneiva PUBLISHER Dreamcatcher Interactive 416) 638 5000 REQUIRED Windows 95 Eight-speed CD ROM drive Pentium 166 16MB RAM, 180MB HD space, DirectX compatible video card, DirectX-compatible sound card WE RECOMMEND Pentium 233 32MB RAM MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS None

If you thought you'd seen the last of the *Myst* and *7th Guest* clones, *Cydonia*'s here to prove you wrong. Unfortunately, that's about the only thing it does really well....

After the recent backlash against "twiddleware" adventures that were long on puzzles and completely deficient in every other department, I really didn't expect to see any more *Myst* or *7th Guest* clones for quite a while. But apparently there's a sizable group of gamers out there who don't care about stuff like dialog or story in their "adventure game" so long as they get a heaping helping of puzzles to keep them busy — and that's precisely the crowd that *Cydonia* is aimed at.

Cydonia's game content is "based on NASA and the Russian space programs," but all that means is that developer Aneiva used the now-famous pictures of the face on Mars and other planetary landmarks as a jumping-off point to postulate that a great civilization once existed on the Red Planet. It's not a very inspired concept, and neither is the game's plot: mankind has trashed Earth, and to survive, it must colonize another planet.



Even in non-interactive sequences like this, the graphics in *Cydonia* are blocky, grainy, and too pastel.

When the game opens, a lander containing you and two fellow crew members has crashed in the Cydonia Mensae region of Mars after hitting a powerful force field. The gameplay in this opening sequence belies *Cydonia*'s true nature — you must find a way to dump the lander's fuel before the ships explodes, then turn your attention to assisting your injured crewmates. That means doing all the stuff associated with traditional graphic adventures such as talking to characters, exploring the environment for useful objects, and figuring out how to use the stuff you've acquired. None of the obstacles facing you in this sequence are particularly difficult to overcome, but at least you've got a pretty good idea of what you need to do and why you're doing it.

Once you get everything under control on the lander, though, you leave your shipmates behind and head out onto the surface to find a way to deactivate that force field — and that's when *Cydonia* reveals its true colors. Your quest eventually takes you to three locations on the Martian landscape — the aforementioned face, a five-sided pyramid, and a grooved cliff face dubbed Tholus — but at each of them you'll do pretty much the same thing: locate and solve puzzles.

There's a wide array of puzzle types in *Cydonia*, and while there are a few "gimmies" here to help players get rolling, the rest of them are extremely challenging. Part of the difficulty can be

Here's one of the puzzles you must pass as part of your initiation; apparently, the Martians thought highly of those golf-tee puzzles you can pick up in the lobby of Cracker Barrel restaurants.

attributed to the lack of feedback: even though you might have solved several puzzles, you really don't have much of a clue what effect your efforts have had or what you should do next. You can ask for a hint on a specific puzzle if you don't know what the goal is, but that doesn't give you advice on where you should go.

You'll have to access your "suit computer" at several points during play to translate Martian symbols plastered on about every surface in the gameworld, and while the concept sounds intriguing, it's really nothing more than an artifice to make it even harder to get down to the nitty gritty of puzzle-solving. It also means you'll have to keep pencil and paper handy to draw the symbols you see so you can input them into the computer's decryption program — odd, considering that your suit has a built-in camera that feeds its images directly into the computer.

Most puzzlefests like this at least sport gorgeous graphics in lieu of character action or plot development, but even in this department *Cydonia* falls short. The visuals here are alternately grainy and blurry, with washed-out pastels the order of the day: in some puzzles, it's hard even to differentiate between colors.

In the end, the only reason to buy *Cydonia* is to acquire a new collection of puzzles — and if you're expecting anything more than that you're bound to be disappointed.

Stephen Poole

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

38%

HIGHS: Puzzles galore makes for dozens of hours of game time.

LOWS: Almost no character interaction, paper-thin story, clumsy interface, and distressingly bad graphics.

BOTTOM LINE: Makes a great entrance test for Mensa, but fails as an interactive adventure.

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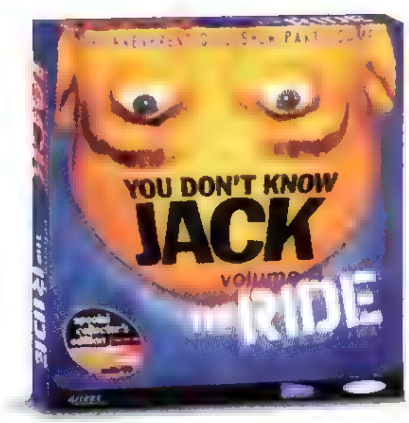

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Blackstone Chronicles

CATEGORY Adventure DEVELOPER Legend Entertainment PUBLISHER Mindscape, *www.mindscape.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 166, 32 MB RAM, 200 MB hard-drive space WE RECOMMEND Pentium 200 MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS None

It's curiously empty and a little cheesy, but this game still manages to be an engaging, classic-style adventure.

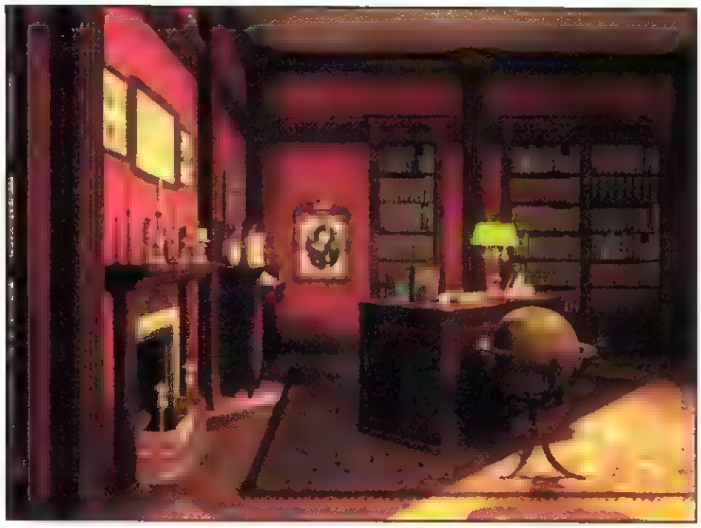
John Saul's best selling *Blackstone Chronicles*, a "serial novel" modeled on Stephen King's *The Green Mile*, has made its way to PC with the help of the old school game developers at Legend Entertainment. The result is the kind of narrative-driven, atmospheric adventure game we see too little of in these days of soulless *Myst* clones.

Blackstone Chronicles is as much a disturbing trip through the less...shall we say, enlightened.. periods of psychiatric treatment as it is a modern ghost story. The tale is set in the Blackstone Asylum in Blackstone, New Hampshire. Long abandoned, it has recently been turned into a museum on the history of mental health practices but its spirits don't rest so easily. The late head of the asylum, Malcolm Metcalf, was a sadist who relished the tortuous treatments he inflicted on his patients. Malcolm's son, Oliver, was also a victim of his father's sadism; he's now on the road to recovery from a mental breakdown he had five years ago. He has a wife and young son and is getting on with his life when the opening of the asylum museum stirs up some old ghosts.

The spirit of Malcolm Metcalf lures Oliver's son, Josh, to the asylum and hides him away. Oliver (that's you, of course) must make his way through the asylum to confront his own demons and save his son. Fortunately for him, his father's spirit isn't the only one still trapped in the building. Within the rooms, walls, and furniture of the old place are the uneasy ghosts of the mental patients who lived and died there, and each has a sad story to tell and a desire to be freed. They're willing to help Oliver — if Oliver helps them.

These characters are never seen; they're only heard. The only person you see in the game is Josh, who is represented by still photos strung together in one of the game's cheesier sequences. The voices of the ghosts speak to you as you enter rooms or click on different objects. All the locations are rendered in admirable and evocative detail, with point-and-click navigation linking them together. Each time you move, the game uses a QuickTime video clip to create the illusion of seamless motion — but it doesn't really work. The videos are fairly grainy and choppy, and they don't match up on either end with the sharply detailed still frames. Four years ago, *The 7th Guest* created a smooth flowing environment on that looked and ran much better on a 486. We have a right to expect better visuals in a 1998 game that requires a pretty fast Pentium.

The videos can be skipped most of the time, though, leaving a pretty effective still frame progression through an interesting environment. Each room is crammed with objects and hot spots. A complete history of some of the depraved "treatments" used on the insane is accessible through display cases in most main rooms. These same display cases also contain some of the objects needed to solve puzzles and proceed to the next room or floor. Game play is a series of barrier puzzles solved by combining and using objects, and driven by dialog with the ghosts. None of the puzzles will stop experienced gamers for long; this relative ease of play might disappoint veterans expecting a more challenging adventure game experience from Legend's latest design. The only time things ever get really tricky are in the few timed puzzles, which are easy enough to restart that they hardly slow you down.



The rooms and halls in the asylum, such as Malcolm's study, are all rendered in meticulous detail. They're full of descriptive hot-spots and objects needed to solve the puzzles found throughout the game.

Your father, Malcolm, forced you to watch and participate in his depraved treatments of mental patients. Obviously, you two have some issues that need to be worked out.

The detail and style with which the asylum is rendered makes for an interesting environment to explore. As you unravel the stories of the individual ghosts and put together objects to get further into the building, the designers maintain a real sense of narrative drive and urgency. The utterly empty and static environment seems to be the result of a deliberate decision, intended to create a feeling of isolation and tension, but it's still rather off putting in the same way that *Myst* is: hours of solitary wandering in a lonely place becomes numbing.

Still, *Blackstone Chronicles* offers some effective atmosphere in a traditional, modestly challenging adventure game. Since there are so few such games made nowadays, that's enough to recommend it to many adventure-starved gamers.

T. Liam McDonald

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

79%

HIGHS: Classic-style adventure gameplay; atmospheric visuals; compelling story.

LOWS: Empty feeling because no real character interaction; some tacky production elements.

BOTTOM LINE: If you like leisurely, puzzle-based gaming with an actual story, this is a good one.

eXtreme Paintbrawl

CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER HeadGames PUBLISHER Activision, (310) 255-2000 *www.activision.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, CD-ROM drive, Pentium 90, 16MB RAM
WE RECOMMEND Double-speed CD-ROM drive, Software store with return policy MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS IPX; Modem, Maximum players: 1 (with a patch this might improve)

HeadGames' newest paintball-themed shooter is even more "eXtreme" than a Vanilla Ice CD!

Ahh, paintball. Nothing spells fun like getting together in the woods with a bunch of manly cronies, running about commando-style, and unloading a bucketload of stinging paint welts onto your opponents' various tender body parts. Up until now, PC paintballers have been treated to a few well-done multi-player *Quake* mods that simulated the popular wargame, but there hasn't been a retail product that recreated the exciting world of paintball in full 3D glory. Come to think of it, we never really *needed* one — but hell, we never needed *Cabela's Big Game Hunter*, either.

So leave it to HeadGames to bring us *eXtreme Paintbrawl*, which proudly classifies itself as "the first non-violent 3D shooter" (which is kinda like saying "the first porno flick without nudity") Nevertheless, I was more than ready to give this bargain-basement title a chance — after all, the concept *is* kinda-sorta original, and the game might prove to be an interesting departure from all the recent run-and-gun gore-fests.

When you start the game, you're presented with a seriously ugly "eXtreme Screen," where you can start a pick-up match, practice on empty maps, begin a tournament, or search for the embarrassing typos on almost every screen (the description of the EXC 68 states how "it's expansion chamber design let's you shoot more balls per tank") Once you've equipped all eight members of your paintball team, you can hop into the actual game, and let the eXtremeness begin.

And whoo-ee, this is where the game starts to reek. Graphically, *Paintbrawl* is a blast from the past — it uses the four-year-old Build engine that brought life to the minions of *Duke3D*, *Shadow Warrior*, and *Blood*. This means that there's no 3D acceleration, and the dated graphics feature pixelicious walls and horribly animated sprite-based characters. Still, the blotchy visuals could be forgiven if the gameplay was the least bit engrossing, which, of course, it is not.

The artificial intelligence displays a "flocking" routine where all the players bunch up against the wall and some get stuck. Don't ask why.

The game contains a whopping (cough) five maps, where the goal is to capture the flag. Now, you don't actually have to bring the flag *back* to your own side — just touching it is good enough to win the game and dump you back to the eXtreme screen. While the enemy AI does a pretty good job of standing in place and firing at anything that walks by, sometimes they get catatonic and just *stand* there.

Sadly, this sporadic confusion extends to your teammates, whose behavior has been realistically modeled after the characters in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. These fellows run in circles, bump into each other, jump off cliffs, hump the walls, and moonwalk while shooting paintballs from their butt. Even though you can switch between teammates by using the number keys, take care: if you accidentally switch to a character that's stuck in a wall, you get "squished," and the entire team dies. Oops.

eXtreme Paintbrawl features two exciting sound effects: the fart-like sound of your gun firing and a liquid-y splat of the paint ball smacking into its target. I would have expected screams of "I'm hit!" and the like, but I suppose most of the team's work went into the AI programming instead. As for the "online" component, I'm sure the network modes in *Paintbrawl* would be very exciting if the programmers had actually remembered to make them work. You can host a game over an IPX network, but the dialog box won't let you actually connect to someone else's game. This means that you can play over a network, just not with each other.

The only redeeming feature of *Paintbrawl* is the soundtrack — in all my years in the industry, I've never heard anything so unique. Racing guitar jams combine with country twangs and classical music — all within the same song, like some twisted music major's science experiment. If I listened to this music while I was paintballing, I'd be an unstoppable eXtreme death machine!

All in all, the only thing eXtreme about this game is the eXtreme amount of raw torture it puts you through before you finally smack the uninstall button and take it back to the store (which, pray to god, has a forgiving return policy). If PC paintball is what you crave, head onto the Internet and point your browser towards one of the readily available *Quake* mods available. But whatever you do, stay the hell away from this.

Colin W. Williamson

You! Stay here and defend the team flag! Wait! Stop moonwalking! What in the hell are you *doing*?

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

6%

HIGHS: The box and manual can be recycled.

LOWS: The actual game disc is *not* biodegradable; uses a four-year-old engine; AI is so bad, it's funny.

BOTTOM LINE: It's gaming garbage taken to the eXtreme! Avoid at all costs.

http://pc.ign.com

"So I throw this 2 o'clock hitter[1] a nudist[2] and he fists a cripple[3] right over my leather man's pancake.[4] Damn! I'd snapped that cousin's[5] morning journal[6] off at the handle with a Peggy Lee![7] Well Captain Hook[8] decides he's going with the ugly head[9] rook' with the deuce[10] - even though I'd collared[11] the banjo[12] on deck! Of course, Mr. Guess[13] don't give him any black,[14] so the rook' issues the Annie Oakley[15] and we lose the ballgame."

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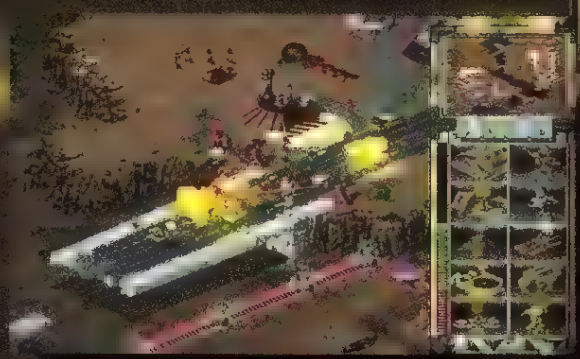

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ORIGINAL COMMAND & CONQUER

Blood II: The Chosen

CATEGORY: Action DEVELOPER: Monolith Productions PUBLISHER: GT Interactive, (800) 610-4847, *www.gtgames.com* REQUIRED: Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 133; 32MB RAM WE RECOMMEND: Eight-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium II 233, 64MB RAM, Voodoo or Voodoo2 graphics card MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS: IPX, TCP/IP, Modem Play via DirectPlay; Maximum players: 16

Grab a moist towelette and get ready for some killing because Caleb is back in the next gore-soaked installment of the *Blood* franchise.

Just over a year ago, Monolith Productions used 3D Realms' aging Build engine to turn out a sleeper hit called *Blood*. A gory, horror-inspired shooter, *Blood* introduced gamers to a sinister world of creepy critters, innovative weapons and a dark, vengeance-driven hero called Caleb. The game enjoyed enough success to warrant a sequel, and now here it is in the form of *Blood II: The Chosen*. The good news is that Monolith has abandoned Build in favor of its swanky new LithTech engine (the technology behind the company's recent *Shogo: Mobile Armor Division*). The result is one tasty-looking shooter.

The story behind *Blood II* picks up where the original left off, with Caleb wandering the Earth, licking his wounds and thinking up new one-liners as he sets out to wipe out what's left of the evil Cabal cult. So Caleb raises the three other members of The Chosen and sets off to kick some ass. Unfortunately, the members of the Cabal have started fooling with otherworldly forces and some serious baddies are crossing over into our world. So, not only does Caleb have to deal with the forces of the Cabal, he has to seal the rift the Cabal has created.

The game kicks off with you battling the standard Cabalco goons across urban landscapes, and progresses until you cross into the netherworld to face these hellish creatures on their home turf. The design of the creatures is top-notch — there can be no doubt that these things come from a *very* bad place. But while visually inspiring, their artificial intelligence isn't too hot; they don't do a great job of avoiding your shots, which the designers seem to have lazily compensated for by upping their armor.

"When you get to hell, tell 'em I sent you. You'll get a group discount." You've gotta love one-liners like that.

Like the original, *Blood II* does a great job of conveying a brooding, atmospheric world in which to play. The gothic Cathedral levels are amazing, as are several abandoned buildings — which include nice little touches like dead folks hanging from spinning ceiling fans, and impaled bodies littering the floor and walls. The only criticism regarding the level design is that there are far too many "lab" levels — they're often nothing more than normal, everyday environments, with little of the tension or suspense you'd expect from a game with this subject matter. Adding to the disappointment is the fact that the final few levels are surprisingly bland.

One of the big draws of the original *Blood* was the shameless glee in which it embraced complete and utter carnage, and fans of the original will be happy to hear that this same attitude is present in the sequel. While not quite as over-the-top as the first *Blood*, there are definitely some nice evil touches. You'll slice the throats of innocents to take their "life force" (health), and pop various limbs off your enemies with well-aimed shots. Throughout it all Caleb laughs with the joy of a child — what could be more fun than offing your enemies? — and rattles off a number of cheesy one-liners. Adding to the dual attack of campiness and creepiness, *Blood II* also features plenty of nudge-nudge references to horror movies (which includes you stumbling across the lair of a certain predator), and some great in-game music.

Much like *Shogo*, multiplayer is the weakest link in the game. The multiplayer maps are uninspired, seemingly strung together without a lot of thought. Also, lag can be a problem. There will be a multiplayer patch released to remedy this, but out-of-the-box the performance is not on the same level as, say, *Quake II*.

There are a few other problems, the most obvious being the long load times between levels (a painful shortcoming Ritual's *Sin* also suffered from). Even on a high-end machine (a PII 400), the "quick load" feature was anything but quick. If you're using a lower-end system (don't even *think* about playing this game on anything lower than our recommended specs), it will take a good, long while for the game to load. There are also some annoying control problems when it comes to climbing ladders.

For the most part, *Blood II* is a fine, by the numbers shooter and not an unwelcome addition to the 3D action scene, although games like *Half Life* have demonstrated that the genre has already moved on from this kind of formulaic carnage. But if all you're looking is for over-the-top violence and wise-cracking anti-heroes, this will give you what you need.

—*William Harms*

Hmm, looks someone should have stayed in bed this morning. Little creepy touches like this really add to the atmosphere of the game.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

80%

HIGHS: Cool looking monsters; creepy atmosphere; all the gore you can handle.

LOWS: Long load times; shaky AI; some bland level design.

BOTTOM LINE: Creepy, mostly excellent gameplay marred by a few glaring technical and design problems.

http://pc.ign.com

Fighter Pilot

CATEGORY Action DEVELOPER Electronic Arts PUBLISHER Electronic Arts, (800) 245-4525, *www.ea.com* REQUIRED Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, 85MB hard drive space, DirectX 6 compatible sound and video cards WE RECOMMEND Pentium 233, 64MB RAM, Joystick, 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics- or Voodoo 2-based accelerator; Joystick MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS Serial/Null Modem, Modem, IPX, TCP/IP, Maximum players: 8

Light entertainment at its lightest, this jet combat game short-changes simulation and action fans alike.

It's hard to deduce just what kind of game *Fighter Pilot*, a new, non-Jane's jet combat game from Electronic Arts, is trying to be. Featuring more than two dozen single-player missions and four different planes, it sounds like an interesting crossover — it's got the pacing of a flight sim and the mechanics of an action game.

But that duality proves to be its Achilles' heel. In realistic sims, air combat is slow and methodical, and there's usually a *lot* of open air between a fighter and its targets. With so much to keep track of (the flight physics, complex weapon and radar systems, enemy intelligence, and so on), engaging enemies is downright difficult, and you're thankful when there aren't too many of them or they don't come on too quickly.

Action games, on the other hand, make it simple to fly and shoot, and good ones make up for the lack of realism by giving you lots of bad guys at a breakneck pace. You don't care that there's no sign of any flight model or physics-based realism because, with all of the ordnance flying around you, you wouldn't have time to think about it.

The problem with *Fighter Pilot* is that it tries to combine the best elements of both these disparate genres, but instead comes off as a weird, unsatisfying experience that's neither fish nor flesh.

The graphics are pretty appealing, and feature nice smoke and lighting effects; that's why it's a shame the game is so dull.

Splashing enemy fighters is so simple, you can take them out as fast as they come into range.

Your default view is above and behind your plane, reminiscent of the old Sega arcade game *Afterburner*. You can select a cockpit view, but it's not much use; there's little in the way of a HUD. You've got a radar screen, an outline of your plane showing its state of repair, a small viewscreen which displays camera or target views, and a few text readouts showing information like airspeed, mission status, and remaining weapons. A pitch ladder is also available, but it's redundant.

Once airborne, you'll notice a complete lack of a flight model. There's some gravity modeling, in that you accelerate with your nose pointed downward and vice versa, but that's about it. The control changes are so subtle from one plane to the next that you can disregard them without any effect on your game. So much for the sim aspect.

To complete missions, you simply follow pre-assigned waypoints and blow stuff up. Enemy jets and SAM sites attack you from the air and the ground, but there just aren't enough of them to keep things interesting. Combat is a simple matter of locking missiles and firing; you get an almost infinite supply of missiles, so you can fire away with impunity. As for the defensive side of things — well, not once in hours of gameplay did I ever have to execute any sort of air combat maneuver, if an enemy locks onto you, one quick turn and a well-timed flare will nearly always foil the incoming missile. You can even take about four direct hits — even on the hardest level — before you're in danger of going down.

Most missions offer you some sort of support in the way of wingmen or AWACS. It's always better to go with the AWACS because they're actually helpful, allowing you to see every enemy on an overhead map screen; very little control is offered over wingmen and their combat skills are, well, questionable.

The graphics are impressive, even in software mode, and with a 3Dfx-based card, they look splendid. Vehicles, smoke, missiles, and explosions are dynamic and well rendered. But these visuals are small compensation for the repetitive gameplay. *Fighter Pilot* could have been a solid flight sim or an exciting action game, but without a clear direction one way or the other, all of its gameplay elements are too diluted to satisfy fans of either genre.

Joel Durham Jr.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

31%

HIGHS: Nice graphics; very easy to get into.

LOWS: The slow pace and simplistic nature make this game dull and unchallenging.

BOTTOM LINE: This game is for novices *only*, and even then, *Fighter Pilot* is so disjointed that it's a little hard to recommend it to *anyone*.

Chaos Gate

CATEGORY: Strategy DEVELOPER: Random Games PUBLISHER: SSI, *www.ssionline.com* REQUIRED: Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive, Pentium 133, 16MB RAM, 200MB hard-drive space, Windows-compatible sound card, Mouse, Keyboard WE RECOMMEND: Pentium 200, 32MB RAM MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS: Split-screen/Hotseat, Modem 28.8+, IPX, TCP/IP Maximum players: 4

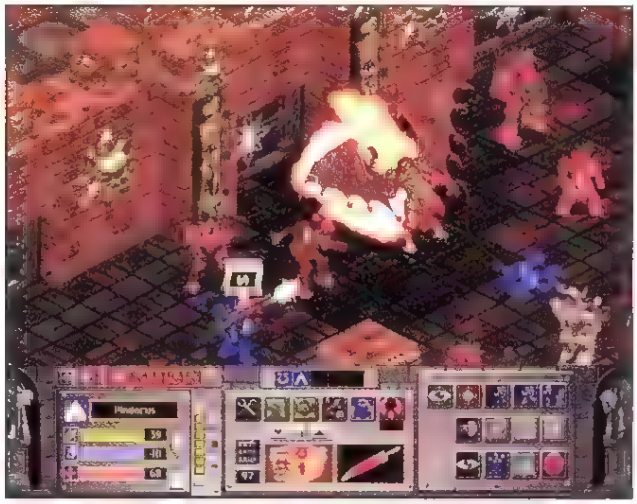
SSI revisits the Warhammer universe again and comes up with another excellent conversion of this deep and enjoyable series.

Over the past year, strategy gamers have been blessed with a pair of largely enjoyable Warhammer based offerings: *Dark Omen* and *Final Liberation*. Based on Games Workshops' ever expanding Warhammer universe of table-top gaming, they both managed to capture at least some of the magic of the real thing. Up until now, *Final Liberation* had come the closest to recreating the feel of the original game for PC — but now we have *Warhammer 40,000: Chaos Gate* to take things a step further. By and large, it's the best PC implementation of the Warhammer system to date, despite some annoying failings.

Despite the apparent similarities, *Final Liberation* and *Chaos Gate* are two very different games. *Final Liberation* is based on the Warhammer Epic rules, which recreates the large-scale strategic battles of the table top system, while *Chaos Gate* is based on the squad-level Warhammer 40K system akin to X-COM. Random Games based *Chaos Gate* on its two-year-old tactical combat engine first seen in the promising *Wages of War*, and used to greater effect in *Soldiers at War*. SAW still had its problems, notably a large screen that obscured a good portion of the map view. For *Chaos Gate*, Random has streamlined the system and adapted it for the unique needs of a Warhammer game, and in doing so has finally unlocked the full potential of this engine.

The mechanics are simple and adaptable. Units range across a map viewed from an isometric perspective. Mouse commands enable you to move and fire in turn-based combat. A menu bar allows access to more complex commands, such as changing weapons, using objects (grenades, bombs, and medkits), and manipulating switches and doors. The map can be zoomed at three magnifications and viewed at any of seven elevation levels, ranging from hilltops to enclosed buildings. Lava, swamp, arctic and forest terrain tiles are mixed with fairly large fortress and building structures to create a diverse set of game maps. Thus, combat can range from valleys and hilltops in open terrain, to room-by-room fighting inside buildings.

Terrain graphics are pretty sharp for the most part, though some of the ground tiles look a little bland. Unit graphics, however, really shine. Two forces are represented: Ultramarine and Chaos Marines. Each has different infantry units, weapons, and vehicles while the Chaos side also has demonic minions and other critters to do its bidding. The units look like they're lifted right out of the original rule books, with different uniforms and individual weapons represented on each figure.



The forces of Chaos feel the fire of an Ultramarine rocket. The combat system is easy to use and adaptable for different tactics and approaches

This diversity of units is what keeps Warhammer fresh. Not only are there different kinds of marines each with their own skills, but also a wide array of exotic weapons, from standard guns and flamers to chainsaws and power swords. Each squad can be equipped for each battle, and then supplemented with extras such as battlewagons, dreadnoughts, and "psykers" with psychic attacks. It makes for a rich gaming experience. For some reason, however, SSI and Random Games have scuttled this near perfect setup by failing to include missions fought from the Chaos side. As a matter of fact, you can't fight as Chaos at all, which is a serious disappointment.

Maps and units are richly detailed. They can be zoomed at three zoom levels, and viewed at seven different terrain elevations. Here, we can peer inside a Chaos fortress.

Only fifteen scenarios are offered, but because of the extras there's no shortage of gameplay. These scenarios are strung together to form the campaign game. When played as a full campaign, your squads gain skills and suffer losses. Campaign play is also made more interesting by randomized, optional missions inserted into the series of scenarios in order to help your squads gain valuable experience. Random scenarios can be generated based on user-designated settings such as map type and size, object density, unit types, and mission type. A complete and simple-to-use mission and map editor also helps extend the life beyond the fifteen initial scenarios. Stable four person Internet and network support round out a pretty full package.

Chaos Gate doesn't break any new ground, but it does create a tactical gaming experience that many find lacking in the real-time realm. It looks good, plays great, and is always interesting and challenging. What more could you ask?

T. Liam McDonald

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Excellent turn-based tactical gameplay. Rich, diverse world.

LOWS: You can only fight as Ultramarines. Minimal keyboard support. Some minor bugs.

BOTTOM LINE: Excellent tactical combat, with lots of units, good graphics, and an interesting system.

85%

http://pcgn.com

NBA Live 99

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

CATEGORY Sports DEVELOPER EA Sports PUBLISHER Electronic Arts (650) 628-1001, *www.easports.com* REQUIRED Win 95/98, 4x CD-ROM drive, P166 (with Direct3D accelerator) P200 (software only), 16MB RAM, 100MB HD space WE RECOMMEND PII 266, 32MB RAM, 165MB HD space, 8x CD-ROM drive, 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics- or Voodoo 2-based accelerator, Gamepad MULTI PLAYER OPTIONS Serial/Null modem, Modem, 28.8 IPX, Maximum players 8

Forget about the NBA lockout — EA Sports' latest basketball sim has more than enough top-quality hoops action to get you through the season.

As I'm writing this, it's mid-December, and the NBA regular season remains in limbo. I'm having a hard time trying to figure out which side is worse — the bird-brained owners for digging their own graves and paying unproven rookies mega-millions of dollars, or the ravenously greedy players crying about how they can't survive if they don't squeeze every last cent from their bosses. Aaah. I say screw 'em both — go get a copy of *NBA Live 99* and have a blast playing out the season yourself.

As much as I enjoyed last year's version, *Live 99* has outdone it in nearly every way, especially in the simulation aspects. A gamepad-intensive game like this will never appeal to the heavy-duty sim crowd, but players willing to overlook some statistical anomalies will be in for a major treat.

Even on a low-end system with the the detail turned down, the graphics are amazing. The player animations are extremely fluid and the arenas nicely detailed. Play on a top-of-the-line system, and the eye candy goes into overload. Lighting effects abound, with real-time player shadows dancing across the reflective floor surface. Even the crowd is animated, which adds a nice touch although their "spritely" nature is in stark contrast to the polygonal players. But that's the only real graphical complaint to make about the PC's best looking basketball game ever.

The texture mapping of the players' faces, complete with changing expressions, sets a new standard for sports games.

Out on the court, the gameplay has been tightened up and refined from previous versions. The players no longer go flying across the arena upon contact, and the loose and slippery control has been replaced with a convincingly solid feel. Playing defense is now a matter of keeping your body between your man and the basket; and on offense, the free trips through the lane for lay-ups have been greatly reduced. Though steals and blocked shots are still too numerous, this is the by far the most accurate simulation of the game of basketball that the Live series has managed yet.

Perhaps the biggest improvement to the gameplay is the number of foul calls, both for and against your squad. It's still not perfect (I found the totals to be about 60 per cent of what you'd see in a real game), but it's a huge step in the right direction. The artificial intelligence of the computer-controlled teams has also been revamped, and can be quite challenging at the higher levels, even for veteran players.

As usual for this series, the interface is beautifully designed and the funky background music complements it perfectly. Statistics for simulated games are very accurate, and the amount of information available is enormous. All of the familiar game options are back (exhibition, season, playoff, and three-point shootout), plus new additions like a practice mode and career play.

The player models and animation in *NBA Live 99* are incredible.

As good as this year's version is, there are some problems that creep in from time to time, especially with these new features. The practice mode only lets you use one player, making it much too limited to be useful, and the career mode is pretty lame, covering only 10 seasons, with no rookie draft (rookies on the whole are missing from *Live 99* thanks to the lockout), no salary cap, and barely noticeable ratings changes from year to year. The fatigue ratings are also completely messed up, rendering substitutions unnecessary. This can be remedied manually with the player editor, but it's a rather tedious process. EA Sports should have a patch out by the time you read this, or you can check around on the web for user-created roster patches that fix the problem.

Another new feature that didn't quite work out is the live sports ticker for updating NBA scores. Since there isn't a real season going on, if you have a dial-up connection the game will automatically try to connect to the Internet, causing it to lock up. This can be worked around fairly easily (log on first and then disable the ticker in the game settings), but it's disturbing that a blatant problem like this slipped through the QA process.

Despite these few gaffes, *NBA Live 99* is a sure-fire winner for basketball fans. I've experienced every type of outcome you can have in the 30 games I've played, including blowing out (and being blown out by) the computer, as well as several overtime games that have come down to the final shot. It's a close enough representation of the real game to keep you playing right through the season — even if those knuckleheads in the NBA never kiss and make up.

Rob Smolka

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

92%

HIGHS: Brilliant graphics and animations; exciting on-court play; improved AI.

LOWS: Too many steals and blocks; career mode is poorly implemented; sports ticker bug.

BOTTOM LINE: The closest any of us may get to a real NBA game this year.

Deer Hunter II: The Hunt Continues

CATEGORY: Simulation DEVELOPER: Sunstorm Interactive PUBLISHER: WizardWorks Group REQUIRED: Pentium 133MHz, Windows 95/98, 16MB RAM, 40MB hard-drive space, 8x CD-ROM drive, DirectX-compatible video card, DirectX compatible sound card WE RECOMMEND: Pentium 233MHz, 32MB RAM, 150MB hard-drive space, 3Dfx based video card MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS: None

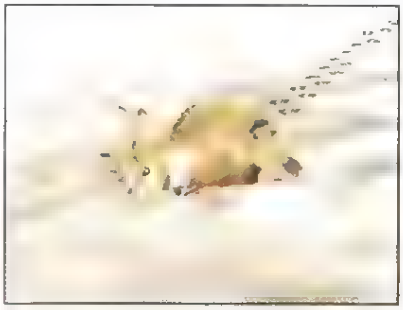
Deer Hunter II is sure to please even the most demanding deer-hunting aficionados, but everyone else will be left wondering just why they're so excited.

When _Deer Hunter_ came out of nowhere early this year to grab the number one spot on all the PC gaming sales charts, I was just as shocked as many other long-time gaming pundits. It wasn't the subject matter that stunned me, though I do have to admit that the box art — a deer standing stock-still with the cross hairs of a telescopic sight over its heart — was enough to creep out even an avowed meat-eater like me. No, what I found amazing was that in spite of its wretched graphics, limited options, and tedious gameplay, _Deer Hunter_ continued to sell faster than Pabst Blue Ribbon at a Jeff Foxworthy concert.

Except for the pixelated trees, the graphics in _Deer Hunter II_ are a huge improvement over the crude visuals found in the first game.

Apparently, deer hunting enthusiasts would jump at any chance to simulate their favorite pastime on a PC, so I wasn't holding out much hope for any major improvements in _Deer Hunter II_. But once again it was my turn to be shocked because _Deer Hunter II_ features a wide array of improvements enough, in fact, for it to be taken seriously as a game and a simulation.

In the original _Deer Hunter_, virtual hunters had little or nothing to do except wait for deer. You picked a spot on a map, appeared there, and turned around in hopes of spotting a deer. You couldn't track deer even to finish off one you'd wounded, and the digitized terrain scenery was dreadful. Once you'd experienced the "thrill" of the kill — which took about three minutes — there wasn't much point in doing it again.



Hmmm...it must have been tough for this deer to dig a hole in the cold ground as he was taking his last breath

WizardWorks probably could have gotten away with only a handful of new features for _DHII_, but to its credit the enhancements here are numerous and varied. Nine weapons are available (the original had only three), including three types of bows, two shotguns, two rifles, and even a pistol. You're also able to select from a variety of accessories such as binoculars, calls, scent attractants and even a GPS unit; the only oddities here are that a jacket takes up one of six valuable inventory slots, and you must carry the GPS to know what time it is (what happened to wristwatches?).

Where the original game limited your forays to three locales, _DHII_ offers a dozen spots in four different states — Michigan, Pennsylvania, Washington and Georgia — in which to track your prey, and the variety in terrain, climate, and deer types provided by the different locations goes a long way towards adding replay value.

But where _DHII_ shows the most improvement over its predecessor is during the hunt itself. You're actually able to walk around and track deer from a first-person perspective (you can carry a tree stand if you don't feel like trudging about), and while the trees are admittedly pixelicous, the ground and terrain graphics are pretty convincing. And the addition of 3D sound, which lets you determine where noises are coming from, helps make you feel as if you're really on the trail of a big buck. The only concrete flaw here is the game's slideshow animations: they're due to the fact that many animations (raising your weapon, for instance) are created by stringing together bitmap images.

So with so many improvements, why doesn't _DHII_ earn a higher score? The reason is simple: deer hunting just isn't very electrifying as a computer simulation. In real life, walking through a lush forest or over a silent snowscape is inherently rewarding, in _DHII_, it's tedious rather than fulfilling, and luring deer to a tree stand isn't any more exciting. Yes, you can up the challenge by choosing a black-powder rifle or longbow, but that doesn't change the fact that the bulk of your time is spent walking or waiting — activities more pleasant in real life than in a game.

Deer hunting fans are sure to disagree with me, and to them I say add 20 points to my score and buy the game. If you're not into deer hunting, though, all the options in the world won't make it any more inviting.

—Stephen Poole

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

66%

HIGHS: New weapons; a variety of locations; and the ability to walk around each area.

LOWS: Waiting or walking is not very exciting gameplay; bitmapped animations can be jerky.

BOTTOM LINE: It's a big improvement over _Deer Hunter_, but it won't convert non-believers.

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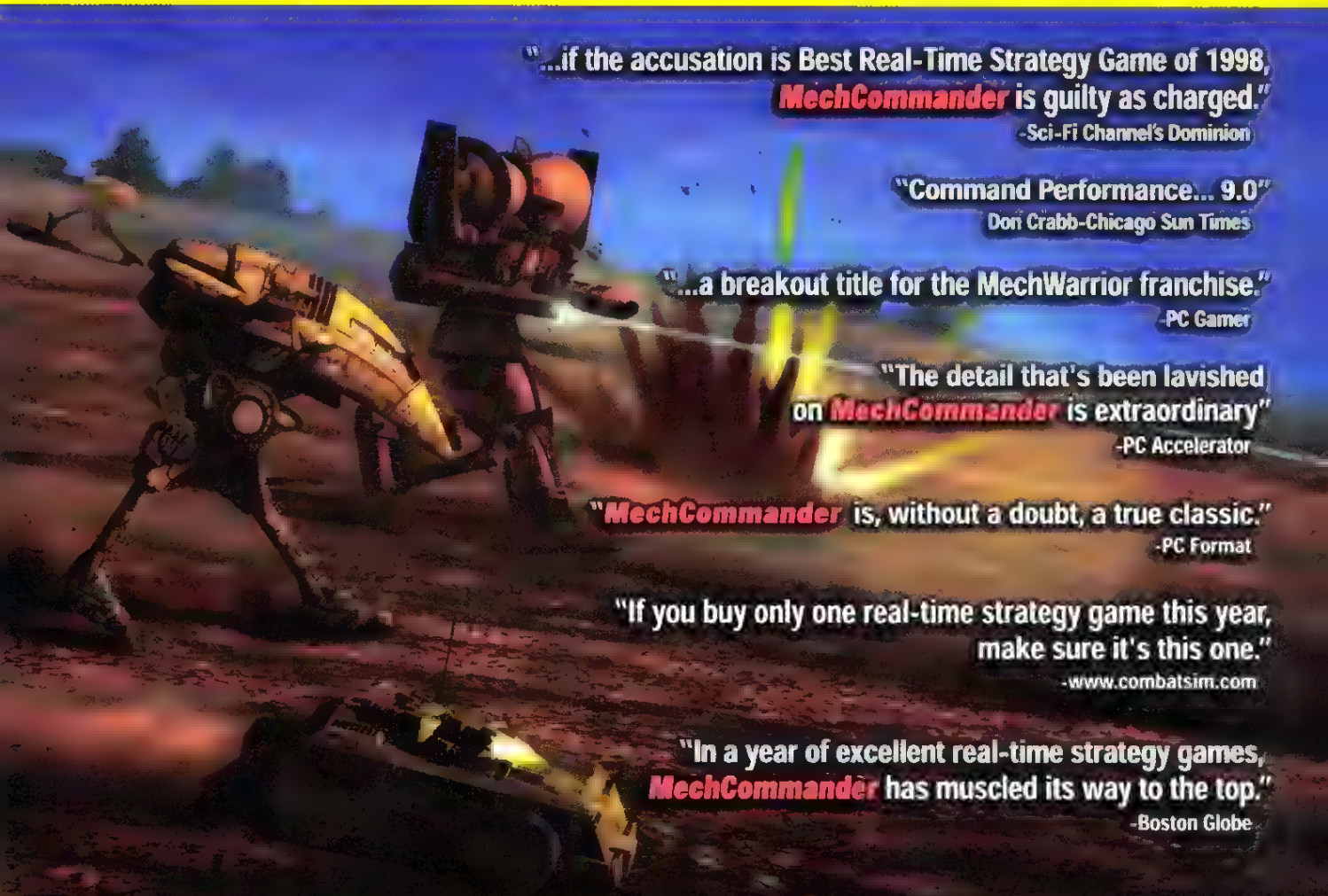

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As easy as it is for us to get caught up in the hardware world, we never forget what drives The Hard Stuff in the first place: the games, baby, the games! Who cares how many giga boops and gargaflops a new 3D accelerator can churn out if we can't play any games that use its features?

With the arrival of Sierra's *Half-Life* — a new high-water mark in first-person shooters — we've never been so happy to see the seamless support of the newest hardware. Unlike many new games, *Half Life* doesn't take the easy approach (i.e., make it run on 3Dfx and Sound Blaster 16 for now, and patch the hell out of it later to support newer hardware). Right out of the box, *Half-Life* runs on any 3D card that supports OpenGL or Direct3D, and it has support for both Aureal's new A3D 2.0 and Creative Labs' EAX formats — the two current competing 3D sound standards. With features like that, the painful waiting game we played while Valve put the finishing touches on its masterpiece seems all the more worthwhile.

This is exactly the kind of game that drives sales of newer, better PC hardware and gives us something to write about every month. Obsess on hardware if you will (we certainly do), but never lose sight of why it exists in the first place.

How We Rate The Hard Stuff

You've been around long enough to know the greatest technology doesn't mean a thing unless it improves the games you love to play. Our reviews focus on real-world testing, but when a number is in order for comparisons, we use the benchmarking tools developed by our hardware-frenzied sister publication, *boot* (now called *Maximum PC*). Between our testing and the bootMarks, we'll give you the lowdown on which devices perform and which ones fizzle.

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Every month, we honor the best peripherals, utilities, and hardware we test with our Editors' Choice award. So when you see the *PCG* Editors' Choice logo on hardware at a local computer store, you can be sure it's among the best.

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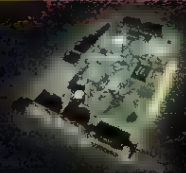

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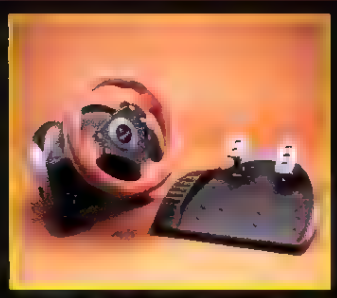

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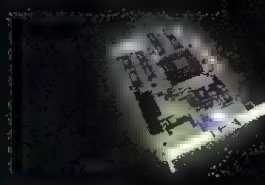

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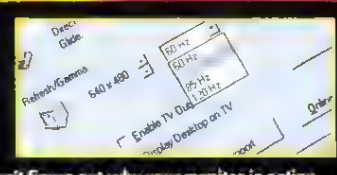

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Voodoo3 Unv

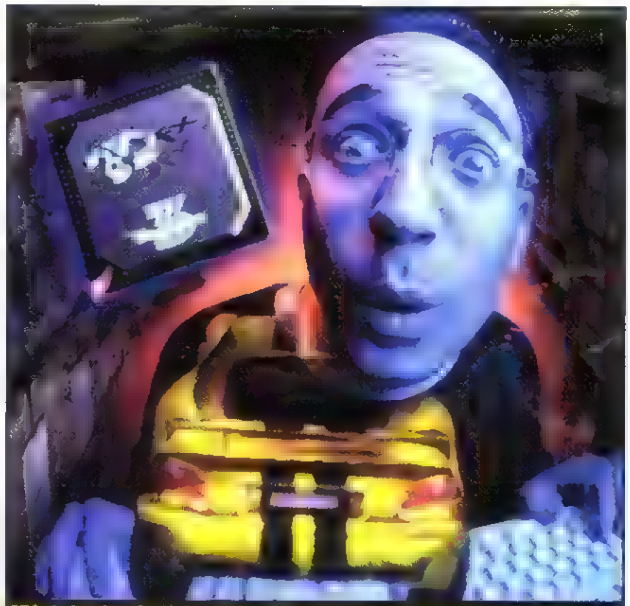
As hard as it is to believe, 3Dfx's Voodoo2 technology is starting to show its age. While a pair of Voodoo2-based cards linked in SLI mode still provide the fastest 3D acceleration going, rivals like NVIDIA's powerhouse RIVA TNT chip are beginning to whittle away at 3Dfx's reputation in the eyes of many hard-core gamers.

Time, then, for 3Dfx to announce its next generation of products designed to leave the competition in the dust just as they're catching up, and start the chase all over again. That's how it's worked before, anyway. But, depending on your point of view, the next generation of Voodoo technology may not have what it takes to top the products it'll be competing with.

There are two versions of Voodoo3 planned for release in mid-1999: the 2000 model is geared mostly for integration into motherboards and retail computer systems; and the slightly more powerful 3000, intended for the hard-core gamer, is the version that will likely appear on retail add-in cards from the big-name manufacturers you'd expect: Diamond, Creative, Canopus, etc. Here is what competitors will be up against with Voodoo3:

- Fully integrated 128-bit VGA/2D/3D/video accelerator
- True multitexturing — 2 textures per clock cycle
- Greater than 7 million triangles/sec. (Voodoo3 3000)
- 4 million triangles/sec. (Voodoo3 2000)
- Greater than 366 million texels/sec. (Voodoo3 3000)
- 250 million texels/sec. (Voodoo3 2000)
- Integrated 350MHz RAMDAC
- 350MHz (Voodoo3 3000) 2048x1536 resolution at 75Hz refresh rate
- 300MHz (Voodoo3 2000) 2048x1536 resolution at 65Hz refresh rate
- 183MHz graphics core (Voodoo3 3000)
- 125MHz graphics core (Voodoo3 2000)
- 3Dfx Voodoo compatibility
- 2X AGP with full sideband support
- DVD acceleration
- Digital LCD Monitor support
- 4MB-16MB SGRAM frame buffer
- DirectX 6, OpenGL, Glide 2.x/3.x support
- .25 Micron technology
- 8.2 million transistors
- Optimized for Pentium II architecture

Is 3Dfx making a mistake?



3Dfx is betting that in-your-face advertising and "hip" visuals will help convince gamers that Voodoo3 is the wave of the future.

Look familiar? If you're familiar with 3Dfx's previous accelerator chipsets, the Voodoo Graphics, Voodoo Banshee, and Voodoo2, it should: Voodoo3 is little more than a faster hybrid of the existing Voodoo2 and Banshee architectures. Like the Banshee, the Voodoo3 is an integrated 2D/3D card (according to 3Dfx, the Banshee's 2D core is just too fast and too inexpensive for them not to integrate it into Voodoo3) with 4MB-16MB of frame buffer memory and support for MPEG2 DVD video playback at 30 frames per second. Like the Voodoo2, Voodoo3 will be extremely fast and include multitexturing as one of its key features.

Voodoo3 will share the limitations of those chipsets as well; like both the Voodoo2 and Banshee, Voodoo3 will only render graphics in 16-bit color and support textures no larger than 256x256 pixels in size.

What will that mean to gamers when the first Voodoo3 cards start shipping in mid-1999? Potentially little, but if enough new games ship with support for those advanced features, 3Dfx could find itself behind the technology curve for the first time in its brief and successful history. Chipsets on the market today — like the RIVA TNT — already support larger textures and true-color rendering (24- or 32-bit color). The possibility of Voodoo3 being outsold by a slightly slower card with prettier rendering capabilities isn't out of the question.

But speed is where 3Dfx believes the action is. According to Toni Tomassi, senior marketing manager for 3Dfx, "True-color rendering will become a viable option for future 3Dfx products, once rendering in 32 bits no longer has a large impact on game speed."

With existing technology, Tomassi says, every current 3D chip — even the TNT — will suffer frame rate drops as high as 50 percent when going from 16-bit color to 32-bit. If the final numbers live up to those released at Comdex earlier this year, Voodoo3 will be as much as two times faster than Voodoo2, which should secure 3Dfx's reign as Speed King of the 3D-chip world.

But is breakneck speed as important as it once was? Months before the Voodoo2 came out, the industry was shocked and excited to hear that Voodoo2 was pumping out *GLQuake* numbers higher than 100 frames of animation per second at 640x480. Just recently at Comdex (a computer industry trade show), *PC Gamer* had a chance to test an early version of Voodoo3, and it ran *Quake II* at nearly 100fps at 800x600 — nothing to sneeze at, especially since frame rates are likely to be higher for the final product. But look at 3Dfx's own claim that frame rates could drop by as much as 50 percent with 32-bit color; does a game that runs at 100fps in 65,000 colors (16-bit rendering) color really offer a better gaming experience than one running at 50fps in 16 million colors (32-bit rendering)? Only time will tell.

Or will it? 3Dfx still holds a lot of sway in the industry, and there's already evidence that the decision to leave true-color rendering out of the Voodoo3's feature set is affecting the decisions

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game developers are making about upcoming projects. Several developers have told us they feel there's little incentive to use true-color rendering in 1999 games, since Voodoo3 won't support it. So 3Dfx's insistence that true-color rendering isn't going to be important in 1999 may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

One of the few deviations from standard Voodoo technology in Voodoo3 is its leap from the PCI bus (or AGP 1X for the Banshee) up to AGP 2X. The Voodoo3 is designed to take full advantage of the sideband features of the AGP 2X bus, but 3Dfx says initial shipments of Voodoo3 will not be able to fetch textures from local memory the way many new AGP-compatible 3D accelerators do. According to 3Dfx, there simply isn't enough bandwidth at 2X to keep frame rates flowing as fast as 3Dfx wants. Sources say the AGP 4X version of Voodoo3 that should be arriving in mid to late 1999 may add support for this feature.

When the original 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics chipset first hit the shelves, some industry analysts thought it would fail outright; there was no room in the market, they said, for a $300 consumer-level 3D accelerator card — no matter how fast it was. Needless to say, 3Dfx proved the pundits wrong. The company stuck to its guns when it released Voodoo2, insisting on unmatched speed and features even if it meant producing a more expensive part than the competition. The high-end market has been very good to 3Dfx, but the conservative feature set of the Voodoo3 suggests that the company is shifting emphasis to a more mainstream market, where it stands to make even more money. Is 3Dfx trading its near-monopoly on a niche market to gamble in the mainstream and OEM game? We'll know in just a handful of months.

Early rumblings from sources at id Software are that Voodoo3 may not be the card of choice for *Quake III Arena* (shown above).

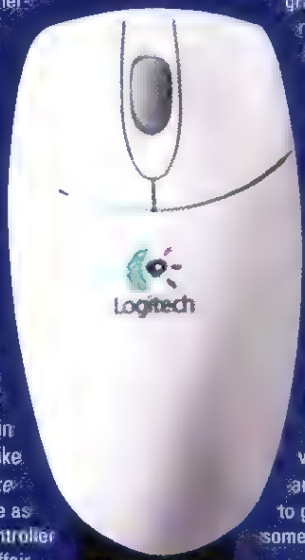
USB Breathes New Life Into Mice

New bus is a boon to gamers.

The Universal Serial Bus — the new peripheral interface commonly known as USB — is really starting to pick up steam as more and more useful products arrive to take advantage of the simple, yet powerful, ports your PC may already have (a pair of USB connectors is a standard feature of all new ATX motherboards).

As useful as many of these products are, none seems more at home on a gamers machine than a USB mouse. First-person shooter fans in particular know that regardless of how fast your frame rates are in favorite games like *Quake* and *Quake II*, using a mouse as your primary controller can be a jerky affair. That's because mice that use PS/2 or standard serial port connections transmit their positions to the PC only about 40 times per second. That sounds fast until you consider how quickly many games run on newer 3D accelerated systems. With a fast Pentium II and a Voodoo2-based accelerator, *Quake II* and similar games can run at upwards of 50 or 60 frames per second — which means your mouse's position isn't even updating as often as your graphics. This can result in a sort of stuttering movement as you use the mouse to pan your viewpoint (if you're skeptical, crank up *Quake II* on a fast system and try rotating in a circle, first with the mouse, then with the keyboard — the difference is staggering).

Enter the USB mouse, which updates 120 times per second — roughly twice for every frame of animation in even the fastest PC games. Movement is noticeably smoother, and — like graphics frame rates — that tends to translate into greater accuracy, which means more kills. We were skeptical about the usefulness of a USB mouse until we tried two of them (one from Logitech and one from Interex); now we're converts, and we can't wait to get our hands on some USB joysticks.

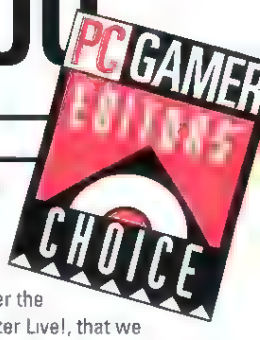


Although it looks like a normal Logitech mouse, this guy has the power of USB. FPS fans, get ready to frag like you've never fragged before!

But what do you do if you don't have Windows 98 or a USB port (both are required for USB support)? As we go to press, several utility programs have been released on the Internet that let you set your PS/2 mouse to function at refresh rates as high as USB mice. The tradeoff here seems to be that more CPU cycles are taken up by the higher bandwidth — even more than by USB. Still, these PS/2 mouse-rate programs offer a quick solution for the gamer who either has an aging machine or doesn't want to part with his current mouse. There are two or three such utilities floating around out there, and you'll find at least one at *www.bluesnews.com*.

DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA

Monster Sound MX300



COMPANY: Diamond Multimedia, *www.diamondmm.com* **PHONE:** (800) 468-5846 *(to order)* **PRICE:** $99.95 *(m.s.r.p.)*

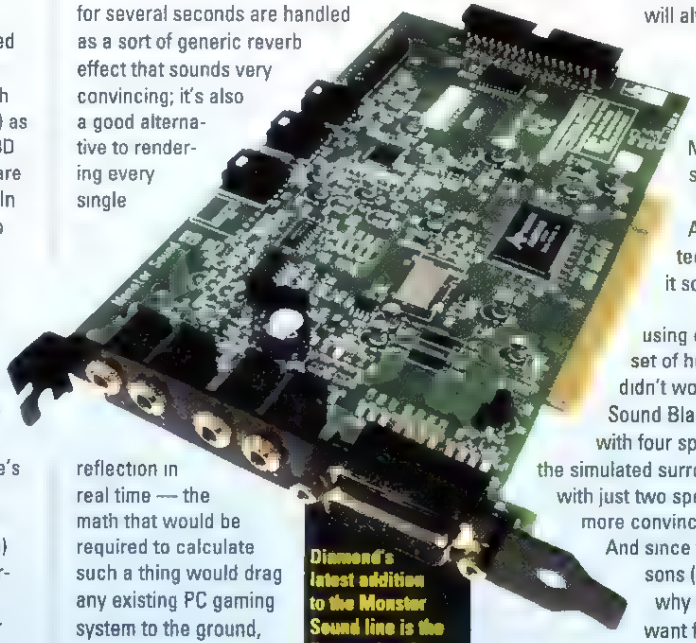
Diamond's latest sound card is designed to give the Sound Blaster Live! a run for its money — and it just might.

Diamond's newest addition to the Monster Sound line is a PCI-based audio card that accelerates Aureal's new A3D 2.0 format (with backwards compatibility with 1.0) as well as Microsoft's DirectSound3D and DirectSound — all in hardware with output jacks for two or four speakers. In a sense, the MX300 is Diamond's answer to Creative Labs' popular Sound Blaster Live! card (although, in terms of its features, it's more akin to the Sound Blaster Live! Value edition, since it doesn't include a digital I/O adapter that allows for true digital recording or for connection to digital stereo receivers). Like the Live!, the MX300 has support for real-mode DOS gaming.

Unlike the current version of Creative's EAX 3D sound standard, A3D 2.0 includes what Aureal calls Wavetracing, which is a combination of real-time reflection (reverb) and occlusion rendering. Occlusion rendering alters sound so that it seems to be filtered through an object (such as a wall, or even water). A3D 1.0 had support for occlusion rendering, but it lacked the ability to simulate reflections produced by walls — a feature that Creative Labs drove home as a key benefit of EAX over A3D (all while downplaying the fact that EAX doesn't currently support occlusion).

Just as in the world of 3D graphics accelerators, the fact that two chips have similar features doesn't mean those features are implemented in the same way. Such is the case with the way sound reflections are handled by the Sound Blaster Live's EAX format and the MX300's A3D 2.0. With EAX, game developers are given the choice of setting a virtual soundstage within the game world, independent of any real-world geometry within the game. This makes it painless for developers to add reverb quickly and easily, but if it's implemented poorly it can also hinder the gamer's ability to "hear" the environment he's really in.

Theoretically, A3D 2.0 handles reflections more realistically in that it takes into account different types of surfaces within a game and calculates the actual geometry of any given 3D space (such as a twisty stone hallway or a big aircraft hangar) as determined by its surface types and environment size. Primary reflections (the first sounds to hit surfaces and then return back to the listener) are rendered in this way, and subsequent sound reflections that would ordinarily continue to bounce around a room for several seconds are handled as a sort of generic reverb effect that sounds very convincing; it's also a good alternative to rendering every single reflection in real time — the math that would be required to calculate such a thing would drag any existing PC gaming system to the ground, audio accelerator card or not.



Diamond's latest addition to the Monster Sound line is the first card we've seen that uses Aureal's new Vortex 2 processor.

That's all well and good, but how does it sound in a real game? The only title we currently have that supports A3D 2.0 is Valve's new first-person shooter, *Half-Life*, but it's a fantastic test bed; nearly every surface in the game is either concrete or metal, so there are lots of sound reflections to simulate. With four speakers set up (two in front and two in the rear, surround-sound fashion) the effect is almost startling. As good as the original A3D format sounds with just two speakers, the addition of two more takes A3D 2.0 to new levels — sounds that should seem to come from behind really do come from behind. In fact, every sound seems to come from where you'd expect...for the most part. One of the problems with both A3D 2.0 and EAX is that even though both offer support for height-differentiated sound (e.g., a laser blast coming up at you from 20 feet below you should sound different from one coming down from above), neither API seems to do a convincing job in this area. There was never a time, with either the MX3000 or Sound Blaster Live!, that we were able to make a distinction in height, either above or below — unless we could actually see what was happening on screen at the time. Still, what we see on screen will always be a part of the psychological illusion created by surround sound systems, and with four speakers, the MX300 did a very impressive job — a bit better than the Live!, in fact. Aureal's Wavetracing technology isn't just hype, it sounds *really* good.

On the other hand, using only two speakers or a set of headphones, the MX300 didn't wow us as much. The Sound Blaster Live! was designed with four speakers in mind, too, but the simulated surround sound it provides with just two speakers is considerably more convincing than the MX300's. And since there are practical reasons (as well as financial) why many gamers won't want four speakers arranged around their gaming desks, this is an important consideration.

Ultimately, the MX300 versus Sound Blaster Live! question comes down to which card will be the best supported by actual games. It's still a little early to say for certain — both Creative's and Aureal's web sites list dozens of titles that *should* arrive with support in the coming year — but how many titles really will, only time will tell. If *Half-Life*, with its support for both A3D and EAX, is any indication, however, we wouldn't be surprised if both formats flourish.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: A3D 2.0; support for two or four speakers; real-mode DOS support.

LOWS: MX300's two-speaker simulation of positional audio isn't as impressive as the Sound Blaster Live!'s.

BOTTOM LINE: Another proud member of the Monster Sound family. Anyone looking for a new A3D sound card should be pleased with the MX300.

http://pc.ign.com

ADVANCED GRAVIS COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY LTD.

Stinger Gamepad

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

COMPANY: Advanced Gravis Computer Technology Ltd., *www.gravis.com* **PHONE:** (800) 535-4242 *(to order)* **PRICE:** $39.99 *(m.s.r.p.)*

If only laptop PCs had decent 3D acceleration, they'd make fantastic portable gaming systems. But at the moment, 3D acceleration has to be built into a laptop, and the best choice for that application is the ATI Rage Pro, an aging chip that leaves a lot to be desired in these days of the RIVA TNT, Voodoo2, and Banshee. Maybe that will change in the near future; for now, though, laptops are still more viable than ever as game platforms, with increasingly large amounts of memory, not to mention fast Pentium II processors. That's good news for the avid gamers we hear from occasionally who say they have to have a laptop for their jobs, but can't afford a desktop machine for gaming.

The Gravis Stinger is a compact gamepad designed specifically for use with laptop PCs.

But what kinds of controllers can you connect to a laptop? Joysticks and gamepads you can use with a portable PC are nearly as hard to find as decent 3D acceleration, since most controllers generally attach via the standard PC gameport, a connection that's all but nonexistent in the world of laptops. Gravis attempts to solve this problem with its Stinger, the first gamepad designed specifically for laptops.

By attaching via the serial port rather than a gameport or USB connector, the Stinger is instantly compatible with 99 percent of all PC laptops. Also, while you may not be able to tell from the photo on this page, the Stinger is about half the size of a Microsoft SideWinder gamepad and only about an inch thick; if you don't have a lot of room to spare in your laptop's case, you can stuff this little gadget in a free pocket.

Like the SideWinder (the obvious inspiration for the Stinger's design), the Stinger has 10 programmable buttons: eight on top, plus two flipper-type buttons up front. The six primary buttons are a bit too close to the directional pad, but it's an understandable tradeoff given the Stinger's compact size, and gamers with average-sized hands should have no trouble getting used to this gamepad's layout. Like an analog joystick, the directional pad gives you varying degrees of control in games that support proportional input, so it'll even work with flight sims.

The Stinger's not such a great controller that we'd recommend it for use with a standard desktop PC; in that arena, its small size makes it no threat to the SideWinder or Gravis' own Xterminator. But when it comes to playing games on a laptop, the Stinger is essentially the only game in town. If you're looking for a way to squeeze a little more Gaming Goodness out of your portable PC, give it a look.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Easy to use, functional; even though it's small, it has more buttons and greater programmability than many gamepads designed for desktops.

LOWS: The Stinger's small size may be a problem for gamers with large hands.

BOTTOM LINE: If you play action games on your laptop, the Gravis Stinger may be precisely what you've been hoping for.

PROTON

MM-750i 17" Monitor

COMPANY: Proton, *www.proton-usa.com* **PHONE:** (562) 404-2222 *(to order)* **PRICE:** $399 *(m.s.r.p.)*

Once upon a time, when you bought a new computer from a retail outlet, you generally picked a monitor from the same manufacturer. It just made sense. These days, though, brand-name monitors from companies like Compaq, Packard Bell, and Hewlett Packard are all too often overpriced when compared to monitors with the same quality and features but less recognizable brand names. Proton's MM-750i fits into this latter category; its picture quality is just about on par with that of the average name-brand monitor, and its price is a bit more reasonable — and yet, just like the average retail monitor, it isn't anything a gamer would want.

Being a multimedia monitor, the MM-750i comes equipped with built-in speakers and an integrated microphone. The microphone is adequate — after all, it's a hard thing to screw up — but the speakers leave a lot to be desired. Even with the help of the cylindrical subwoofer mounted at the rear of the monitor, the sound system is weak on several fronts. Because the speakers are side-firing, you'll have to keep the space on either side of the monitor clear; even then, sound is easily reflected away from your ears and often ends up sounding like it's coming from the rear of the monitor. And with a grand total of 22 watts RMS going to both speakers and the subwoofer, these speakers are barely more powerful than the throwaways you get with most retail PCs; and unlike those, the ones built into the MM-750i can't be thrown away. Sure, you can always disable the integrated speakers and add a better set down the road, but why pay the extra dough for a monitor with features you're not going to use?

The image quality of the 750i was not exactly horrible; at .28mm dot pitch, text was easy to read and graphics were sharp and bright. But when compared to the Sony 17sf II monitor the Proton replaced on our workbench, the MM-750i came up short on all fronts. And like many multimedia monitors, the 750i also demonstrated more distortion and discoloration at the edges of the screen than we felt was acceptable — possibly an effect of the built-in speakers' magnets.

This monitor is not without any redeeming qualities; an on-screen menu and a single rotating pushbutton makes all screen adjustments, which makes tweaking screen size and position very natural (a good thing, too, since the MM-750i doesn't seem to remember these settings when shifting between resolutions). Additionally, Proton has seen fit to include a headphone jack — a feature that should be standard equipment with any PC speaker system. Overall, though, even with its low price, the MM-750i simply doesn't belong on a gamer's desk.

Unlike many monitors that sport built-in speakers, the MM-750i doesn't suffer from a larger than normal footprint.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: All adjustments are made easily with the MM-750i's single control knob and on-screen display; adequate microphone.

LOWS: Poor sound from the built-in speakers; fair image quality; doesn't save settings for different resolutions.

BOTTOM LINE: As with most other multimedia monitors, gamers will want to stay away.

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LOGITECH

WingMan Formula Force

COMPANY: Logitech, *www.logitech.com* **PHONE:** (800) 231-7717 *(to order)* **PRICE:** $179 *(m.s.r.p.)*

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Logitech, a latecomer to the force feedback party, brings us the best racing wheel yet.

We've seen several force feedback steering wheels in the past few months, from SC&T's insanely overpowered Ultimate Per4mer to Act Labs' inexpensive yet responsive Force RS. Just when we thought we'd seen 'em all, Logitech has stepped forward and released the best force feedback wheel we've seen so far.

At the heart of the Logitech WingMan Formula Force wheel is the very same cable-pull system that creates the force feedback effects in Logitech's WingMan Force joystick. Like the stick, the wheel offers a considerably smoother steering experience than the gear-driven controllers we've tested. As much as we liked the Act Labs wheel, we quickly recognized the superiority of the Formula Force wheel when we experienced the Logitech system in action.

Like the joystick, the wheel attaches via either a serial port or USB connector. Although the serial connection will work just fine in Windows 95 and 98, you'll need to be running Win 98 to use the USB port; Logitech says it's the only way it can support USB properly. The difference between serial and USB when using the Formula Force Wheel was nearly indistinguishable in every game we tested, but Logitech says the full breadth of the wheel's force effects can only be felt with the added bandwidth USB offers. When programmers start spending more time programming more detailed force effects into their games, the difference may become more apparent.

Attaching the unit to a desk or table is painless; two arms reach out from the bottom of the wheel unit and clamp to the underside of your desk. Two screws, one on each arm, can then be tightened to secure it.

Maybe it's just us, but it seems that every new force feedback wheel we've tested has come with a better set of pedals than the last. Continuing that trend, the WingMan's pedals come closer to emulating real gas and brake pedals than any wheel we've seen in this price range (under $250 or so). Jumping from gas to brakes and back again is very easy, and requires little getting used to.

Unlike other force feedback wheels, the WingMan lacks a couple of the more common bells and whistles. There's no directional pad as on the Ultimate Per4mer and Force RS, nor are there as many buttons as on any other force feedback wheel. In fact, it only has four buttons, not including the two paddle shifters that are so common these days. For most racing games, however, four buttons is plenty, and we never found ourselves lamenting the loss of extra buttons or a directional pad. The WingMan Formula Force also comes with the same handy programming utility as the WingMan stick, but with such a sparse, standard layout, we never felt the need to use it.

Like the Force RS, the WingMan's strength lies in its subtlety. Where the Ultimate Per4mer shook, rattled, and just about rolled the skin right off of our delicate gamer's hands, the WingMan, while capable of generating a great deal of force, does so sparingly and subtly. Our biggest complaint about force feedback of any type — joystick or wheel — is that it often gets in the way of gameplay. While it should be helping you sense what's going on with your car during skid, for example, a bad force feedback wheel makes pulling out of such a situation nearly impossible. Clearly, Logitech went to the time and effort to see that its wheel works better than that.

Last month, we gave the Act Labs Force RS an Editors' Choice rating and said it was the best force feedback wheel to date. This month, we're telling you the WingMan Formula Force is a bit better. It costs upwards of $40 more, but the difference will be worth it to hard-core PC racing fans.

How could anyone not be taken by the Formula Force's simple yet elegant design?

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Logitech's unique force feedback system proves superior to all the current gear-based force feedback systems; pedals are responsive and feel realistic; USB connection allows for increased range of force effects.

LOWS: The $179 price tag.

BOTTOM LINE: There's a new sheriff in town, and its name is the WingMan Formula Force.

METABYTE

Wicked3D Vengeance

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

COMPANY: Wicked3D Board Company, *www.wicked3d.com* **PHONE:** (510) 494-9700 *(to order)* **PRICE:** $119 *(m.s.r.p.)*

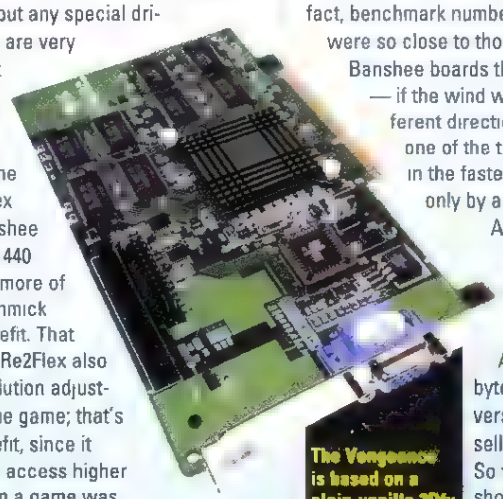
Metabyte infuses its Banshee-powered Vengeance with a healthy dose of enhanced driver software — but to what benefit?

Metabyte, the same group that brought us the Wicked3D featuring the Voodoo2 chipset, is back in action again with its newest 3Dfx card, the Wicked3D Vengeance. This time around, the card is based on the Voodoo Banshee chipset, but it sports the same driver enhancements that gave its big brother an edge.

Re2Flex — the enhancement that allows a single Voodoo2 to attain near-SLI resolutions in Direct3D games that don't restrict custom resolutions — is back, letting the Vengeance attain the highest maximum 3D resolutions of any Banshee-based accelerator (1920x1440, to be precise). WickedVision support is here, too, providing support for stereoscopic 3D in more than 100 games.

Both of these enhancements are great when used with the Voodoo2-powered Wicked3D, but they're less exciting with the Banshee-powered Vengeance. That's because of some fundamental differences between the Voodoo2 and Banshee. Unlike the Voodoo2, the Banshee is an integrated 2D/3D graphics accelerator. It doesn't take advantage of either the Voodoo2's dual-texturing pipeline (which speeds things up by letting the Voodoo2 map two texels in a single pass: e.g., a texture map and a lighting map). It also lacks Voodoo2's ability to function in scan-line interleave (SLI) mode, where two Voodoo2s are linked to share the rendering workload and memory. To make up for these differences, the Banshee is equipped with 16MB of onboard RAM (up from the Voodoo2's max of 12), and can support 3D resolutions much higher than even two linked Voodoo2s. Additionally, the core clock speed has been kicked up a notch from Voodoo2's 90MHz to 100MHz.

With these differences in mind, let's take a look at the Re2Flex drivers on the Vengeance. Although a single Voodoo2 can run at 1024x672 resolution when taking advantage of Re2Flex, the Banshee-powered Vengeance is already capable of running at 1600x1200 without any special drivers. And there are very few games that run at acceptable frame rates at that resolution, so the fact that Re2Flex allows the Banshee to reach 1920x1440 turns out to be more of a marketing gimmick than a real benefit. That said, however, Re2Flex also allows for resolution adjustment outside the game; that's a tangible benefit, since it means you can access higher resolutions than a game was designed to support as long as it's a D3D game that doesn't restrict resolutions.



The Vengeance is based on a plain-vanilla 3Dfx reference design, but driver-level enhancements give it some extra features.

As for WickedVision: it, too, is considerably less exciting on the Vengeance. Used with the Wicked3D and a pair of stereoscopic LCD shutter glasses, the Voodoo2's dual-texturing capabilities are put to good use, since 3D glasses require that every frame of animation be rendered twice (once for each eye). Even on a Voodoo2, frame rates tend to dip noticeably when running WickedVision, and because the Banshee isn't capable of dual-texturing, the slowdown is even more evident.

Ultimately, Metabyte's driver enhancements are an impressive feat of software engineering, but they're a bit out of Banshee's league. On the other hand, they're not a costly premium, so the fact that you won't often use them isn't really a big deal.

And when it comes to more prosaic features, the Vengeance's drivers are every bit as versatile and useful as those that ship with another Banshee board, Guillemot's Phoenix. Both the Vengeance and the Phoenix offer considerably more driver-level control over Glide, OpenGL, and Direct3D settings than Diamond's surprisingly limited Monster Fusion.

Because the Wicked 3D Vengeance is built using the same reference design as the Banshee-based boards from Guillemot and Diamond, it's no surprise that its performance is very similar to those two cards. In fact, benchmark numbers for the Vengeance were so close to those of the other Banshee boards that on any given day — if the wind were blowing in a different direction, maybe — any one of the three cards might bring in the fastest scores, and then only by a very small margin.

Although the version of the Vengeance we were sent for review was the AGP 1x board, Metabyte also makes a PCI version of the card that sells for the same price. So far, our tests have shown that the AGP bus makes very little difference with Banshee-based accelerators, but if your computer lacks an AGP slot, it probably isn't equipped with a Pentium II-class processor, either — that may be important to you since the Banshee is optimized for the Pentium II, and performance will fall off rather sharply on lower-end processors.

If you're looking for a fast, inexpensive graphics card that handles both 2D and 3D graphics and has support for all three of the industry's primary 3D formats — Glide, OpenGL, and Direct3D — a Voodoo Banshee-based card is your only option. And if you can find the Wicked3D Vengeance for a few bucks more than the Guillemot card, the Re2Flex enhancements are probably worth the extra money.

bootMarks

X
(TESTS DIRECT3D PERFORMANCE)
640x480 – 105.34fps
800x600 – 84.92fps
1024x768 – 66.21fps

Forsaken
(TESTS DIRECT3D PERFORMANCE)
640x480 – 112.74fps
800x600 – 91.53fps
1024x768 – 64.55fps

Quake II
(TESTS *QUAKE II* PERFORMANCE)
640x480 – 57.0
800x600 – 43.7fps
1024x768 – 28.5fps

Quake
(TESTS OPENGL PERFORMANCE)
320x200 – 57.3fps
640x480 – 26.5fps

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: 3Dfx Banshee chipset; fast 2D/3D card with Glide support

LOWS: Metabyte driver enhancements don't offer the same punch on Vengeance that they did on Voodoo2; limited to 16-bit color.

BOTTOM LINE: A worthy Banshee-based card with some extras that give it a small edge over the competition.

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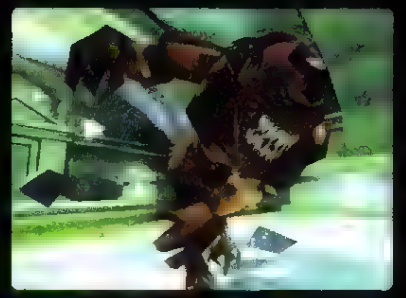

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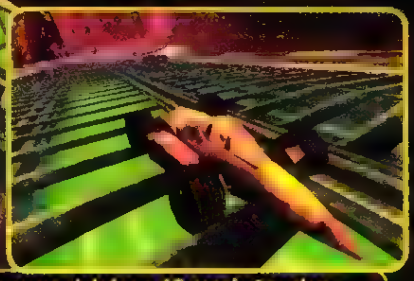

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The Hard Stuff Sideways Page

WE REVIEW SO MUCH HARD STUFF EVERY MONTH, it can be hard to keep track of what's hot and what's not. On this page, we dare to compare hardware we've reviewed in the past year. In fact, there's so much data, we had to turn the page sideways to make it all fit! This month: Controllers!

CONTROLLER	DATE REVIEWED	PRICE AS REVIEWED*	NUMBER OF BUTTONS	PROGRAMMING	AMBIDEXTROUS?	WORKS IN DOS MODE?	FUNCTION	COMMON FEATURES	COMMENTS
Traxxas Free Wheel	March '98	$79.95	2	–	No	Yes	Racing games	TH	Comfortable, responsive control for arcade racing games; high price.
CH GameStick 14	April '98	$69.95	5	Software	Yes	No	Action games	HS, TH	Better than CH Gamestick, but there are still better sticks for the price.
CyberStuff CyberStik	April '98	$89.95	9	–	Yes	Yes	Action games	HS, TH	More of a gimmick than a dependable controller.
Techmedia 3DzoneMaster	May '98	$99	5	Software	Yes	Yes	General purpose	HS	Unique, but not an ideal controller for any game.
Cytech CyberWarrior Digital	[illegible]	[illegible]	Many	Software	Yes	Yes	General purpose	HS, TH	Full-featured, programmable, memorable; affordable.
Interact Vortex 3D	June '98	$59.99	Many	Software	No	Yes	General purpose	TH, Y	Fun and useful for lots of different kinds of games.
UR Gear	June '98	$99	3	–	Yes	No	Action games	–	Poor audio quality; moving your head like a joystick just isn't natural.
Gravis Xterminator	July '98	$59.99	10	Software	No	No	General purpose	–	If you're in the market for a great programmable gamepad, look no further.
Ultimate Performer	August '98	$199.99	8	–	Yes	Yes	Racing	–	Huge dead zone; no test utilities; force feedback effects too strong.
Mad Catz Panther XL	August '98	$79.95	8	Software	No	No	General purpose	HS, TH	Most useful of the "3D" controllers.
InterAct UltraRacer PC	August '98	$29.99	4	–	Yes	Yes	Racing	TH	A simple, elegant little racing controller.
InterAct V3 Racing Wheel	August '98	$59.99	8	Hardware	Yes	Yes	Racing	TH	It controls like the inexpensive piece of plastic that it is.
Suncom SFX Plus	September '98	$49	20	Hardware	No	Yes	General purpose	–	Stick to the original SFX — if you can find one, that is.
Microsoft SideWinder Freestyle Pro	October '98	$74.99	10	Software	No	No	General purpose	TH	Great for motorcycle games, but check it out before buying it for use with anything else.
Act Labs RS Racing System	November '98	$69	6	–	Yes	Yes	Racing	–	Versatile, inexpensive wheel.
SideWinder Force Feedback Wheel	December '98	$209	6	Software	Yes	No	Racing	FF	One of the best FF wheels.
Cyborg 3D Digital Stick	January '99	$69.99	8 + 8-way hat	Software	Yes	No	Sims	HS, FF, T	Good choice for fliers; too many programs to recommend to everyone.
Logitech Wingman Force	January '99	$100	10	Software	No	Yes	Sims/Action	TH,HS,FF	Best FF stick on the market today.
Act Labs Force RS Wheel	January '99	$139.99	9	–	Yes	No	Racing	–	Another one of the best FF wheels available today.

CONTROLLER KEY

Programmability indicates how a controller is programmed: through a software interface, hardware built into the stick, or both. *Common Features*, which many sticks offer, include force feedback (FF), throttle (TH), hat switch (HS), and a yoke, or twist axis (Y). *Price is MSRP except where noted.

http://www.pcgamer.com

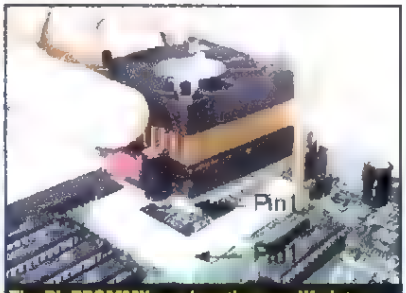
RATINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS • RATINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tech Q&A

Can't figure out why your monitor is acting screwy, or why DirectX can be a pain in the butt? Read on....

Q You've made a mistake in virtually all of your articles about the AMD K6-2 CPU. You've said that you must have a Super-7 motherboard that supports the correct voltages and clock multiplier settings that the K6-2 requires. Well that's not exactly true; in fact, the K6-2 will work with almost any Socket 5 or Socket 7 motherboard. Don't believe me? Visit *www.powerleap.com*, and check out the PL-ProMMX. You'll see that it's a voltage regulator that allows virtually all Socket 7 chips, including the K6, K6-2, Cyrix 686MX, IBM x86 chips, and IDT\Centaur chips, to work with virtually any Socket 5 or Socket 7 motherboard, regardless of voltage and clock multiplier limitations the motherboard may posses. So, if you've been having to settle for a lowly P100 because it has been sitting in a proprietary motherboard for the past several years, for $230 ($50 for the voltage regulator and $180 for the processor) you should now be able to upgrade to a 333MHz K6-2. Not too shabby, huh?

—Brian Abbaticola, via the Internet



The PL-PROMMX can breathe new life into most anyone's aging Pentium class system.

A Not too shabby at all, Brian. Thanks for the heads up. The only problem we can see with the PL-ProMMX is that it adds about 50 percent to the height of the usual processor-fan combination, so it might get in the way of some add-in boards in some systems. One way or another, though, we're going to get our hands on one of these gadgets and see if it does what it's advertised to do. Watch these pages!

The Game Machine represents what we consider a solid, affordable gaming PC that will handle every game currently on the shelves. The Game Machine has a maximum theoretical price of $2,500 — but shop around, and you'll find it for much less. In the span of only a very few months we've taken the processor up from 200MHz to 233 — and now to a Pentium II 233 — to keep ahead of recent increases in games' minimum requirements. We've also replaced the Rendition card with a Riva 128. But we're sticking with a good, old 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics-based 3D accelerator; the newer Voodoo II is a very hot chipset, but the Voodoo Graphics is still plenty powerful for most games.

- Intel Pentium II 233 MMX
- 32MB SDRAM RAM
- NVIDIA RIVA 128 card OR 128-bit 2D card
- 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics-based 3D accelerator
- 4GB IDE hard drive
- 16x CD-ROM drive
- Sound Blaster AWE32 AND/OR positional sound card
- 17" SVGA monitor, .25 dot pitch
- Multi-player gamepad (Gravis Gamepad Pro OR Microsoft SideWinder)
- 56K modem

Q I ran the *MDK* Performance Test on my PII 266, and it generated a result of 126 with my AGP-based ATI card. After overclocking my system to a Pentium II 333 (83 MHz front side bus and a multiplier of 4), the same test churned out a score of 155.

After seeing these results, I must question the validity of the test. In your December 1998 issue, the Diamond Monster Fusion turned a 129, and a Diamond Viper V550 only turned a 127. Both are *much* better cards than the ATI — so what gives? Is this test very dependent on processor speed? If so, why is it a video card benchmark?

—Wayne Boer, via the Internet

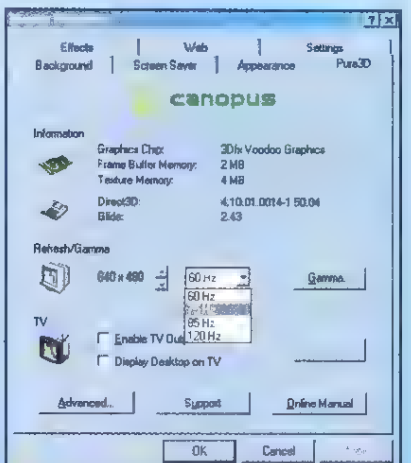
A Actually, Wayne, the *MDK* Perftest was originally intended as an overall system benchmark (especially with regard to DirectX performance), not just a test of the video card. Since we keep all of the hardware in our benchmark system constant, it has in the past been a useful gauge of how fast a given video card is in relation to other cards we've tested on the same machine (especially when considered alongside all the other scores a card receives in our suite of benchmark tests).

Having said that, we decided last month that this benchmark has run its course, and that the January 1999 issue would be the last in which *MDK* Perftest results appeared. It's a fairly old benchmark, at least in gaming-industry years — and the results it generates on the latest gaming systems and 3D accelerators are of questionable value. Next issue, you'll see some significant changes in our existing benchmark suite. We'll also be re-testing all the current 3D accelerators too and running the results in one big roundup feature so you'll finally know where to get the most bang for your buck.

Q I have a question involving the setting of video card resolutions for different games. In my system, I have both a Matrox Millennium II video card and a Voodoo2-based Diamond Monster 3D II. As far as I can tell, I have three places in which to set resolutions: the Windows Display Properties, the settings screen for my Voodoo2 card, and finally, in-game resolution settings. My question is, how are these three settings related, and how do they affect one another?

—Paul Ferlan, via the Internet

A Fair enough questions, Paul. All those resolutions and refresh rates can be confusing enough when you only have one graphics card in your system; it's even worse when there are two. But we're here to help. Resolution and refresh-rate



Make sure that your refresh rates for both your monitor and Voodoo card are the same.

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Glossary

Every month, the Glossary will define terms that appear in The Hard Stuff and may be new or confusing to some readers.

Digital
Components (as in the case of the Gravis Stinger reviewed this month) that are only capable of recognizing information in its most basic form: 1 or 0, or "on" or "off." Although being digital once meant that proportional control wasn't an option, newer digital gamepads (like the Stinger) and joysticks (like Microsoft's 3D Precision Pro) are now capable of sending proportional information digitally — which is quicker and more accurate than using analog methods.

Refresh Rate
The speed in Hz, or cycles per second, at which a video card redraws an image on your monitor screen. A video card set to a refresh rate of 60Hz is redrawing the screen 60 times a second; at 70Hz, 70 times a second, etc. For most people, the image on your monitor will seem to flicker unless the video card's refresh rate is set to 70Hz or above. Unless otherwise specified, games will only run as fast (in frames of animation per second, or fps) as the video card's refresh rate — no matter how much faster your system is capable of running the game.

Texel
Often confused with pixel, a texel is the smallest unit of a 3D graphic image made up of textured polygons. A pixel is the smallest unit of a two-dimensional graphic. For example, a Strogg soldier in *Quake II* is made up of texels, whereas an imp in *Doom II* is made of pixels.

changes in your Windows' Display Properties/Settings tab affect your primary display adapter only — the Matrox card, in your case — and determine the appearance of your Windows desktop. There's a separate tab for your Voodoo2 card, but you don't use it to set the card's resolution; instead, you use it to tell the card which refresh rate to use with each resolution it supports. In-game resolution controls can affect either the primary display adapter *or* your Voodoo2 card, depending on which card you tell the game to use, but those settings are valid for that game alone. So even when you change resolutions within a game — regardless of which video card it's using — you'll find your Windows desktop settings unchanged when you exit the game.

Q I recently bought a new Pentium II 333MHz with 64MB RAM and an AGP 8MB Matrox Mystique G200 to go along with a 12MB Voodoo2 accelerator. I have noticed that in most of my 3D games (e.g., *Jedi Knight*, *Unreal*, *Quake II*) the screen is shifted over to the left or right whenever I enter a game, and I'm constantly forced to readjust the position with my monitor's controls. But when I quit the game, my *desktop* is then shifted out of position. Is there anything I can do to fix this problem?

—Greg, via the Internet

A Greg, you're most likely suffering from a disease called cheap monitoritis. It was once believed to be cured when digitally controlled monitors became common. A good digital monitor will adjust itself to each resolution change and/or and save different settings for each resolution-refresh rate combination, but the problem has resurfaced as more and more monitor manufacturers strip away features to compete in the sub-$1,000 computer market. Because your monitor doesn't save its settings as resolutions change, you're forced to adjust your screen.

Even if the games your playing on your Voodoo2 use the same resolution as your Windows desktop, it's possible they're using different refresh rates; for instance, your G200 may be set at a refresh rate of 75Hz to minimize flicker on your desktop, while the Voodoo2 may be set for 60Hz to maximize speed. Differing refresh rates can lead to just the sort of problems you're running into. Opening your Display Properties menus and making sure your refresh rates are the same for both the G200 and Voodoo2 at each resolution may help. If it doesn't, the only solution is to buy a better monitor or get used to changing your settings frequently. Since monitors ain't cheap, we suspect a lot of gamers are using the latter strategy. Greg Vederman has the same problem with the 17" Packard Bell monitor he uses at home — and he's our technical editor, so it's a common problem with no easy solution.

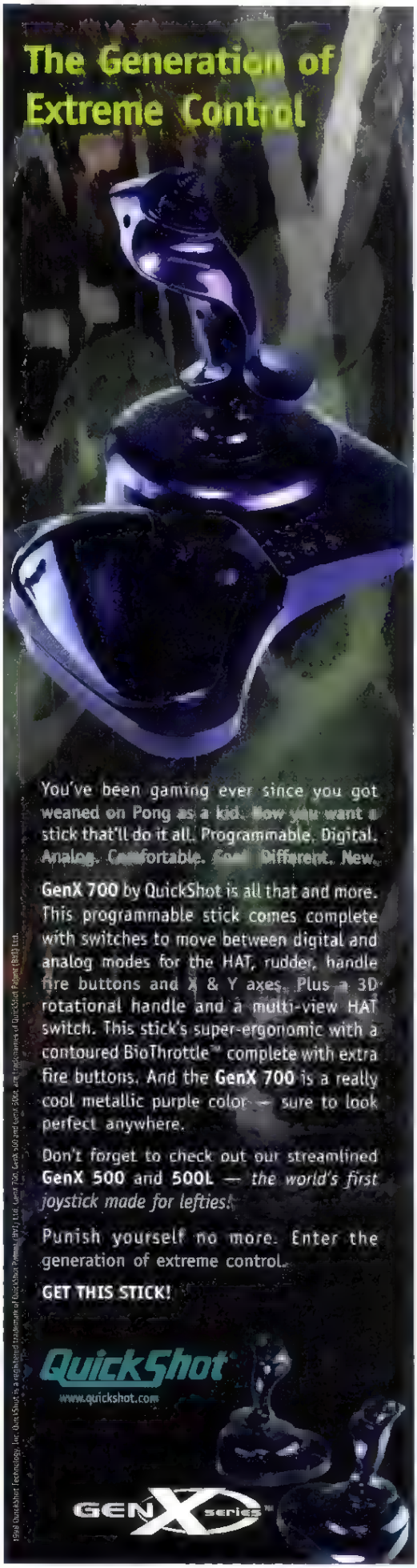
Q I have several games that require different versions of DirectX. Must I load a new version of DirectX each time I want to play a game?

—Name withheld, via the Internet

A Nope. Although DirectX 5 had some problems early on with games that required DirectX 3, DirectX 6 has so far shown no problems with backwards compatibility; it should work with any game designed for an earlier version of DirectX. So once you've got the latest version installed, you shouldn't have to worry about installing the older ones to play older games.

Need Help?

If you have a hardware question or comment, write to us at:
Greg Vederman, The Hard Stuff,
PC Gamer, 150 North Hill Drive,
Brisbane, CA 94005
or E-mail: *gvederman@pcgamer.com*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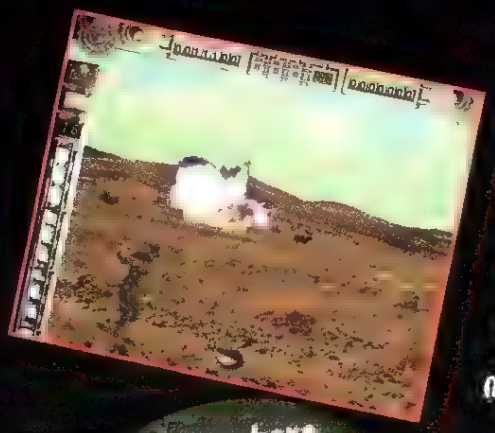

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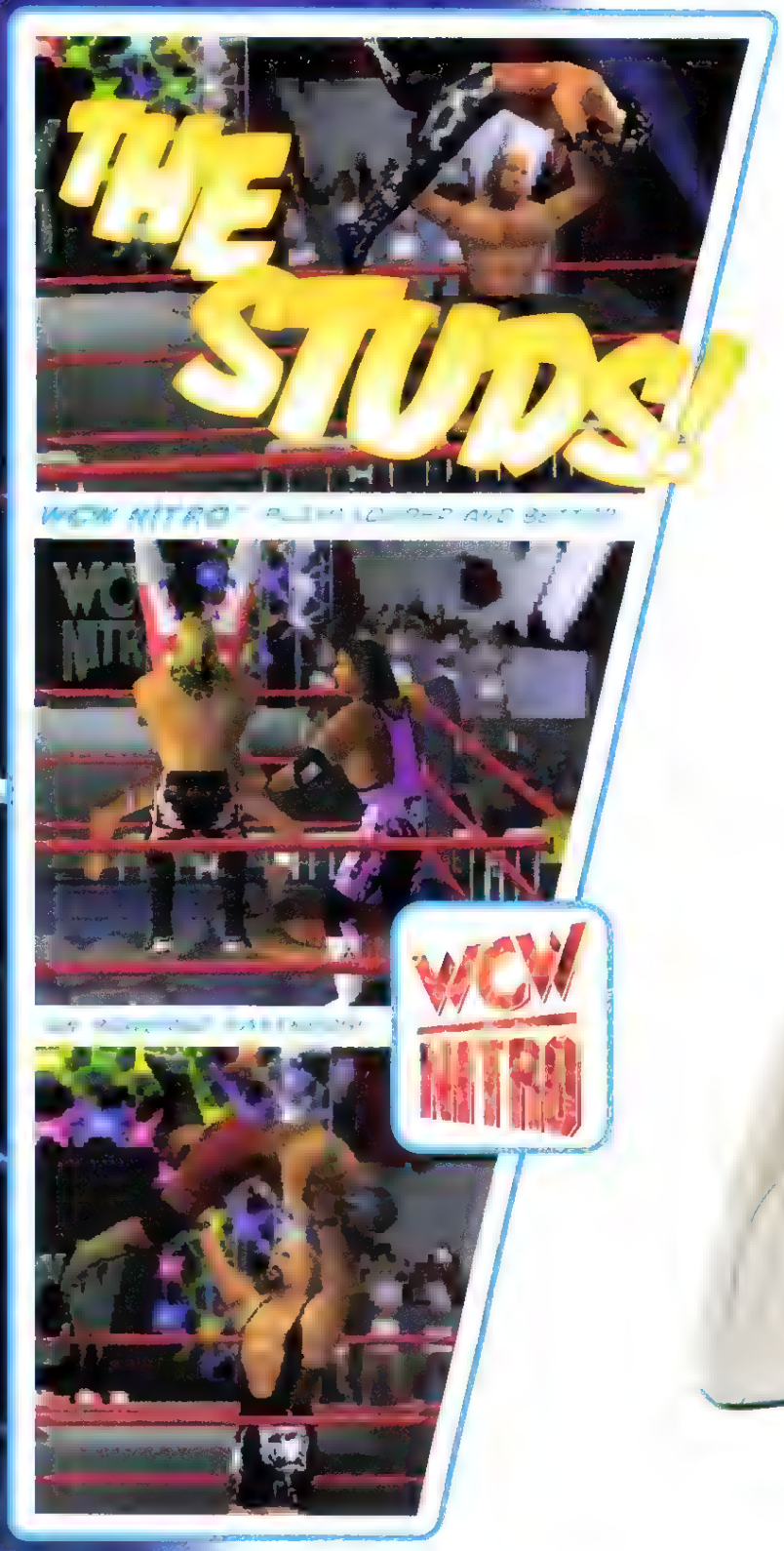

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Desperationware

I've been trying to come up with a word that describes the piles of knick-knacks, repackagings, "fixed" editions, and other doo-dahs that show up on my desk each month. "Desperationware"? "Crapware"? "Schlockware"? Some publishers in dire financial straits, such as Interplay and Sierra, are shoving this stuff out the door as fast as they can mint it, and retailers will be shoving it straight back after it sits on their shelves gathering dust.

I'm forced to ponder these imponderables by the fact that 14 such packages came this month. Not all are crap, mind you; some are decent bundles. But none adds much to gameplay that wasn't in there in the first place, and in many cases simply fixes horribly screwed up programs to bring them up to the level of the merely acceptable.

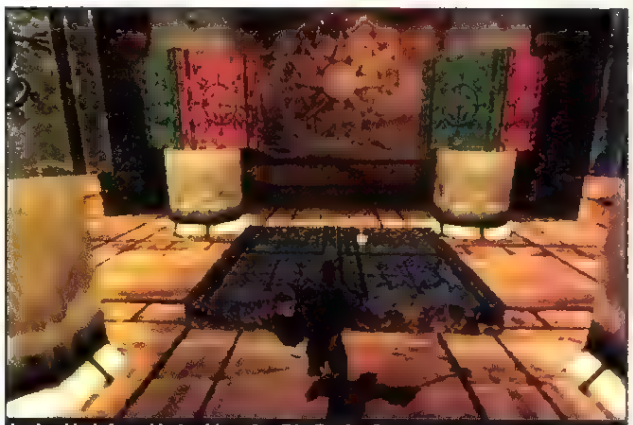
Here, now, is a terse but scintillating rundown of the crap I put up with this month so that you didn't have to.

Sierra set some sort of record this month for crowding my front porch with stuff we all saw and disliked last year. Check out this list of moldy oldies: *Lords of Magic Special Edition*, *Sierra Pro Pilot 99*, *Sierra's Complete Chess*, *Hoyle Casino*, *Hoyle Card Games*, *Hoyle Classic Board Games*, and, of course, *Red Baron 3D*.

Complete Chess is a theme packaging of *Maurice Ashley Teaches Chess*, *Power Chess*, and *Extreme Chess*. Why do you need three different chess programs, when only one (the non-Sierra *Extreme Chess*) is worth a damn? Obviously, you don't, but here they are nonetheless. On the other hand, the three Hoyle games simply mystify me. I know I saw these games last year. Actually, they're all pretty decent executions of classic games, but I'm stumped if I can tell why they're being reissued. The graphics don't look any better. There may be some new games in them, but I can't tell, and obviously the consumer isn't supposed to ask.

Then we come to the unholy trinity of defective Sierra games from last year: *Pro Pilot*, *Red Baron II*, and *Lords of Magic*. Each of these shipped in a beta state, missing crucial features and crashing frequently. Hardware acceleration support and a modicum of stability has been added to the flight sims, but I'll deal with them in depth next issue after I spend some quality time putting them through their paces. So far the hardware acceleration actually looks pretty good, but that's just an early opinion.

Lords of Magic SE mostly fixes a fair number of the failings of the initial release, such as friendly and enemy AI and diplomacy. Of course, this should have been done *before* the game was published instead of a year later. Sierra has also bundled the *Legends of Urak Quest Pack* with *SE*, adding five new large-scale quests — such as a Grail quest and a retelling of *Beowulf* — as well as new spells, monsters, buildings, artifacts, and an editor. I've only spent a few hours with it so far, but some of the nuisances of the original are less prominent, and



In the *Limb from Limb* add-on for *Die By the Sword*, you get to experience a rather terse "new" quest that feels just like the original quest, right down to the always-nailbiting tile puzzles.

Lords of Magic SE includes a game editor that allows users to place items for the creation of custom scenarios.

AI tweaks and other fixes, along with the inclusion of the Legends of Urak add-on, help make *Lords of Magic SE* a decent game, only a year too late.

The holiday season's collection of bundles contained a few winners — and an alarming number of boxed patches.

Wing Commander Prophecy Gold includes all of the *Secret Ops* missions, which also add some new ships and weapons.

it's worth a second look

Running a close second in the shovelware market is Interplay, which also takes second place (after Sierra) as The Company Who Hates Its Customers The Most. Why else would Interplay force us to watch mandatory trailers for *Secret of Vulcan Fury* for a year, and then cancel the damn project?

Interplay's contributions include *Carmageddon: High Octane*, *Descent Freespace: Silent Threat*, *Die By the Sword: Limb From Limb*, and *Redneck Rampage: Possum Bayou*. Two of these are actual add-on discs, but the other two are mere Befuddleware (meaning you can't tell if they're add-ons, bundles, or new games).

Limb from Limb's main appeal is the addition of the rather twisted but quite fun Ogre hockey mode. Ogre hockey is played in a cave with goals at either end, as multiplayer teams attempt to smack a little critter into the opposing goal. It's one of the few novel multi-player games I've seen lately. The disc also adds a few new monsters (such as the Minotaur and some kind of huge beetle), four new arenas, and three new multi-play games. Unfortunately the "new" quest that is the core of this game is short, unoriginal, and overall pretty weak. They have added cooperative multiplay to the quest, randomization of creatures and booty, and the ability to also play as an orc, skeleton, or as your sidekick, Maya, but it doesn't really add much. Despite the novelty of Ogre hockey, this is a pretty mediocre add-on.

The *Silent Threat* add on for *Freespace* is a pretty conventional mission set with two new ships, four weapons, a new capital ship, and forty missions. The missions are a mix of user-designed and developer-designed creations and are by and large a decent expansion if you finished the original. It took me some searching to figure out just what *Carmageddon: High Octane* and *Redneck Rampage: Possum Bayou* were. Turns out they're bar gain-bin "abridged" versions of the games, designed for the discount market. The deceptive packaging makes no mention of this, and it's very easy to assume from the titles that you're buying either a real add-on or a "gold" compilation (*Max Pack* is the actual *Carmageddon* bundle). This is a new low for Interplay.

Finally, the uberbundles got here just in time for Christmas. *Wing Commander Prophecy Gold* bundles the original game with the missions that make up the *Spec Ops* set originally released on the Internet, complete with the new weapons and ships. Origin has also packaged *Longbow*, *Longbow II*, and *Flashpoint Korea* into one heavy box as *Longbow Anthology*. *Quake the Offering* is a similar collected of odds and sods in an oversize box, collecting the original game and both add-on discs. *Total Annihilation Commander Pack* follows suit with a box stuff with the original game, *Core Contingency*, *Battle Tactics*, and a long strategy guide.

PCG

BUG PATCHES*

***Klingon Honor Guard* v. 1.1** (MicroProse): Shaves a couple of megabytes from the memory usage. Further improves the loading time. Bug Fixes: Server memory leak when switching levels, sporadic dynamic lighting crash, and sporadic file-loading crash on low-memory machines; fixed volumetric lighting rainbow effects on 3DNow! Other changes — see *README.TXT*. *KHG_V11.ZIP*

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX

***Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six* v. 1.04** (Red Storm): Gunfire combat model chart deleted by patch (fixes shotgun problems). Shooting through portals should be corrected. In multiplayer, players should no longer be able to warp through walls by artificially inducing lag. Using the arrow keys to manually join should now show proper graphics. Removed some bandwidth constants in the code to eliminate possible cheat. Many other changes. *R6104.EXE*

***Railroad Tycoon II* v. 1.02** (Gathering of Developers): Creates versions that work around European copy protection flaws, which were crashing with some Pioneer CD-ROM drives, fixed "Invalid Windows Version" errors for NT users. Fixes bug when AI assumes control of a formerly human-owned company (via a human's starting a new company or resigning). Fixes Campaign Scenario #13 (India) so AI companies now build. Fixed Campaign Scenario #10 (France) so gold and silver wins work. Fixed Stand Alone Scenario (North America) removing buggy coal-price event. *RT2_A.ZIP*

***Sin* v. 1.01** (Activision): Load times improved; long reloads after dying fixed. Sound compatibility issues fixed. Save-game from compact install now works properly. Multi-player skin showing up red is fixed. AutoPlay from CD splash screen is fixed. Manumit, the subway mutant, now works. Monster AI has been adjusted. Area 57 crash bug has been fixed. An animation issue with Assault Rifle and HV Chain Gun in multi-player has been fixed. Other fixes. *SIN1_01.ZIP*

***Shogo* Multi-player Point Release 2.0** (Monolith Productions): Removed DirectPlay and implemented less problematic TCP/IP driver — this means ShogoSrv should work on NT. Gamespy now reports version as 2.0. Added Port option in ShogoSrv and MultiWizard when hosting. 10 new multi-player levels. Updated and tweaked retail multi-player levels. Moved the weapon firing (along with a lot of other stuff) to the client; smoothed out prediction for other players. Added telefragging for respawning — this fixed some falling-out-of-the-world issues. More improvements. NOTE: Saved games are not compatible with this version, but a cheat has been added to let you jump to any level desired. *SMPR20.ZIP*

SHOGO: MOBILE ARMOR DIVISION

***Warlords III: Darklords Rising* v.1.02** (Red Orb): Summoned Armies no longer drown over water. Curse now works correctly. No more "Super Mercs" can be obtained in cities near shrines. New Rules: "Slay Units" quests only accumulate 1/2 point per unit killed while defending. Barracks & Ranger Towers (along with different castles) are now available 50 percent of the time in Random Maps. *W3D102US.ZIP*

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Whither Gravy Trader?

This month's edition of Multi-Play sports our first and hopefully last – guest columnist. We've been hearing so much what a great game designer our own Coconut Monkey is — and we've received so many inquiries about his much-ballyhooed *Gravy Trader*, billed as "the ultimate in condiment management simulations" — I figured it was time to take a closer look. (After all, even our worthy competitors are so in love with Coconut Monkey that they've featured his affable likeness on their own CD.)

But just who is Coconut Monkey? Is he over-hyped? Where there's smoke, is there necessarily fire? Or, to put it another way, do fish need bicycles? If a tree falls in the forest, can other trees hear it?

Well, all can now be revealed. Today, a disgruntled former employee of Coconut Monkey's, a BASIC programmer by the name of Pierre, gives us the scoop on *Gravy Trader*. In this exclusive excerpt of a 10,000 word Usenet diatribe, Pierre discusses the genesis of Coconut Monkey's magnum opus.

"Let us relive those meetings, the early days of this *Gravy Trader*, when Coconut Monkey had assembled his core team of game designers, including myself, who alone had the skills in the programming of the BASIC to make his visions come to life upon the cathode ray screen. Those were fine days, those early product positioning meetings, for we were all unused to minimum wage, and the rich oil of his tropical wine fueled our soaring imaginations and filled our monkey bellies.

"In those days, we would convene on the veranda of the Coconut Cabana in the early hours of evening, gathered like a circle of Greek students at the table of our bearded philosopher, our ears bent to the wisdom uttered by that hoary seer of interactivity, our leader, our guiding principle, the Coconut Monkey.

"Imagine then, if you will, a tropical cafe, the sun slowly setting, the sky touched with purple and gold, our quiet bar occupied by only a few coco-simians, we, the acolytes of Coconut Monkey.

"He would first tap delicately on his weathered Havana, letting the ash glide into his gold limned conch ashtray, and, though a few ashes would catch the wind and bedeck his fur, he paid them no mind; no, he would instead utter a few remarks on an aspect of our Great Art.

"'I think triangular shaped game boxes will draw immediate attention,' he would say. Awestruck, we could only nod in agreement.

"Or, 'Manuals? Who needs manuals? Let them buy a strategy guide!' The temerity of his genius left us awestruck.

"But once — oh, once, one memorable evening – he said the words that set fire to our budding game developers' souls, something that lit the fires of our creative hearts, something that became the watchword of our industry and the motto of every game developer around the world: '3D acceleration? Who needs 3D acceleration? We can sell it as an add-on package!'

"We hung upon his every word then, taking his mystical utterances as starting points for our own flights of fancy. And then we would speak each in turn, spinning our own, naive visions of the ultimate game, and watch the master carefully for any movement, a stirring, a flicker, or chortle that might emerge from his drunken slumber.

"And as we did so, we would watch the scattered light of the declining sun pirouette across the quietly echoing waves; this play of light upon water mingled our words, our thoughts, our aspirations, and our very beings with the warm, salty waters of the ever-tender sea off the coast of Azure Libro, our island home; a sea that beckoned us like a dark, sleeping goddess; a deity who demanded of us that we seize the quintessence of all that was holy, all that was good, all that was light; who ordained that we make of it the ultimate interactive mass market multimedia CD ROM franchise.

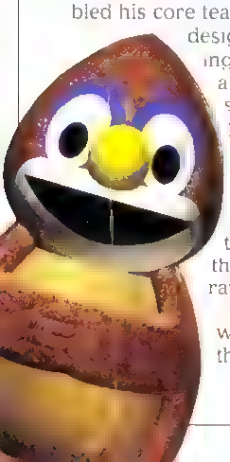
"And so we would talk, late into the night, of how this game, this mighty opus, this singular and unique work of art, this *Gravy Trader* for art it was, though but a twinkle in our collective bad eyes – would transform interactive entertainment as we know it, ushering in a new golden age of unlimited bandwidth, an era of the universal, ubiquitous platform, a millennial moment poised upon the very cusp of a cultural apex, when any monkey, no matter how humble, could forge his tragicomic tale upon the slate of silicon and marketing, and bring it to the teeming millions yearning to point and click.

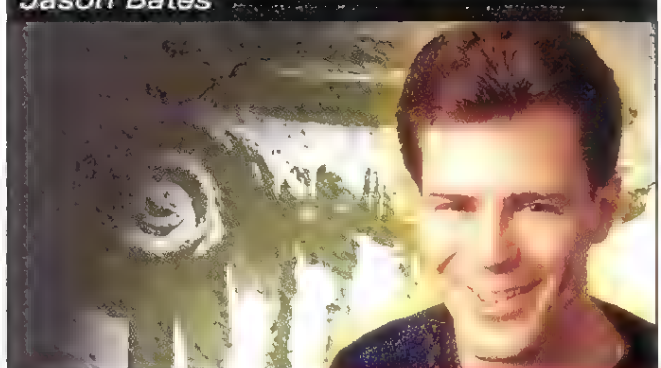
"We daydreamed such sweeping visions of the game we knew we must make, and like some sketch of Da Vinci, it would miraculously spring to life, take shape before our very eyes, like a veritable Phoenix, the Holy Grail of game publishing, and wing forth into the cloud benighted sky over our heads and dance with the very angels of distribution.

"The packaging materials we would concoct! The press releases we would craft! The gratuitously violent and sexist ads we would place! The prices we would charge! And oh, oh, the patches we would release!

"Such were the dreams we spun as we sat there drinking pina coladas, dipping our toes into the booming surf, and watching distant dolphins frolic in twilight's wave. Such is folly, such is youth."

PCG





Only *PC Gamer* could bring you the exclusive inside story on *Gravy Trader*, the game of the decade.

Jack Attack!

One of the many things I enjoy about my job is getting to talk with the people responsible for putting together the games we love. I recently had the chance to speak with Mike Franco, formerly of Accolade and now with Hypnos Entertainment, developer of *Jack Nicklaus Presents: Golden Bear Challenge*. Franco was the producer of the last two Jack games; he left Accolade so he could remain involved in the series, which now belongs to Activision. While we agreed to disagree on a few points about how a golf game should play, I came away from the conversation with a good feeling about the future of the series.

The Jack Nicklaus series has always held one trump card over the competition. Of course, I'm referring to the amazing architect feature that has allowed owners of the game to design their own courses. Even someone with my meager skills can put together a course that is very playable. But my designs look like a child's finger painting when stacked up against some of the masterpieces that are freely available on the Internet (check out Accolade's home page at *www.accolade.com* or The Course Depot at *coursedepot.gagames.com*).

Two of the best of a very talented group are Scott Chesny and Brian Silvernail. These are the guys responsible for Monterey Bay, one of the 10 courses included with *Jack Nicklaus 5* and arguably the cream of the crop. One of the smartest things Franco did was hire this dynamic duo to design the five new courses that will be included in the new game. Their input should also help make the architect features even more robust and intuitive. Getting end users involved in the making of the games has been a more frequent occurrence lately (especially in the first-person shooter category), but all sports game developers should consider a similar strategy. There are plenty of extremely knowledgeable gamers who know every nook and cranny of a particular game series and would love to have the chance to make the games the best they can be.

This will be the first Jack Nicklaus game to use 3D acceleration, but Franco says it's used judiciously.

"We didn't want to sacrifice the beauty of the static scene, so the benefits of acceleration will be seen in better defining the golfer and for powering a picture-in-picture view," he says. This will help the frame rates during the swing animation, which was a problem for *Jack Nicklaus 5*, especially when you used a camera angle very close to the golfer. There won't be any dynamic panning and zooming ala *Tiger Woods 99*, but there also won't be any blurry backgrounds and hideous-looking plant life sullying the visuals.

I was happy to hear that Jim Nantz will be joining Gary McCord on the commentary duties. These two CBS cronies should bring a much more TV-like presentation to the game. The wisecracking McCord did a fine job in *Jack 5*, but he should benefit by being teamed up with a professional straight man like Nantz. Repetitious commentary may be a thing of the past; Franco says he would be amazed to hear the same comment twice over the course of five rounds.

Where the Jack games have always played second fiddle to Access's *Links LS* is in the interface, gameplay, and ball physics departments. Franco is aware of the interface deficiencies, and the team is concentrating heavily on making this part of the game much more intuitive. All of the relevant information the player needs to consider will be presented on the same screen. For example, if the ball is below your feet on a side-hill lie, you'll now be given this information on the main screen, along with the severity of the slopes.

This ties in directly with the physics model. If you don't know the forces acting on your shot, it makes it very difficult to plan your strategy. *Jack 5* did feature an in-depth physics model, but Franco admits the ball flight animation didn't do it any justice at all. He says this is another component that will be comprehensively addressed in *Golden Bear Challenge*.

One area where Franco and I disagreed was the swing interface. Franco believes his method portrays the way you picture the shot you want to hit, and the challenge is in the execution; he doesn't believe that taking distance into account should be part of gameplay. I feel the *Links LS* method, in which you have to gauge where on the swing-meter you need to click to make a shot whose distance falls between clubs, is an essential element. Oh well... as Franco says, "It's my job to win you over to my side of thinking."

I really do like the Jack Nicklaus games. Hell, before the LS version of *Links* appeared, I was a devotee of *Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition*, logging close to a thousand rounds. But as good as the last version of the Nicklaus series was, I still find myself returning to *Links LS* time and again. So, Mike Franco, your challenge, should you choose to accept it: Convert me. Good luck to you and your team for the spring 1999 release.

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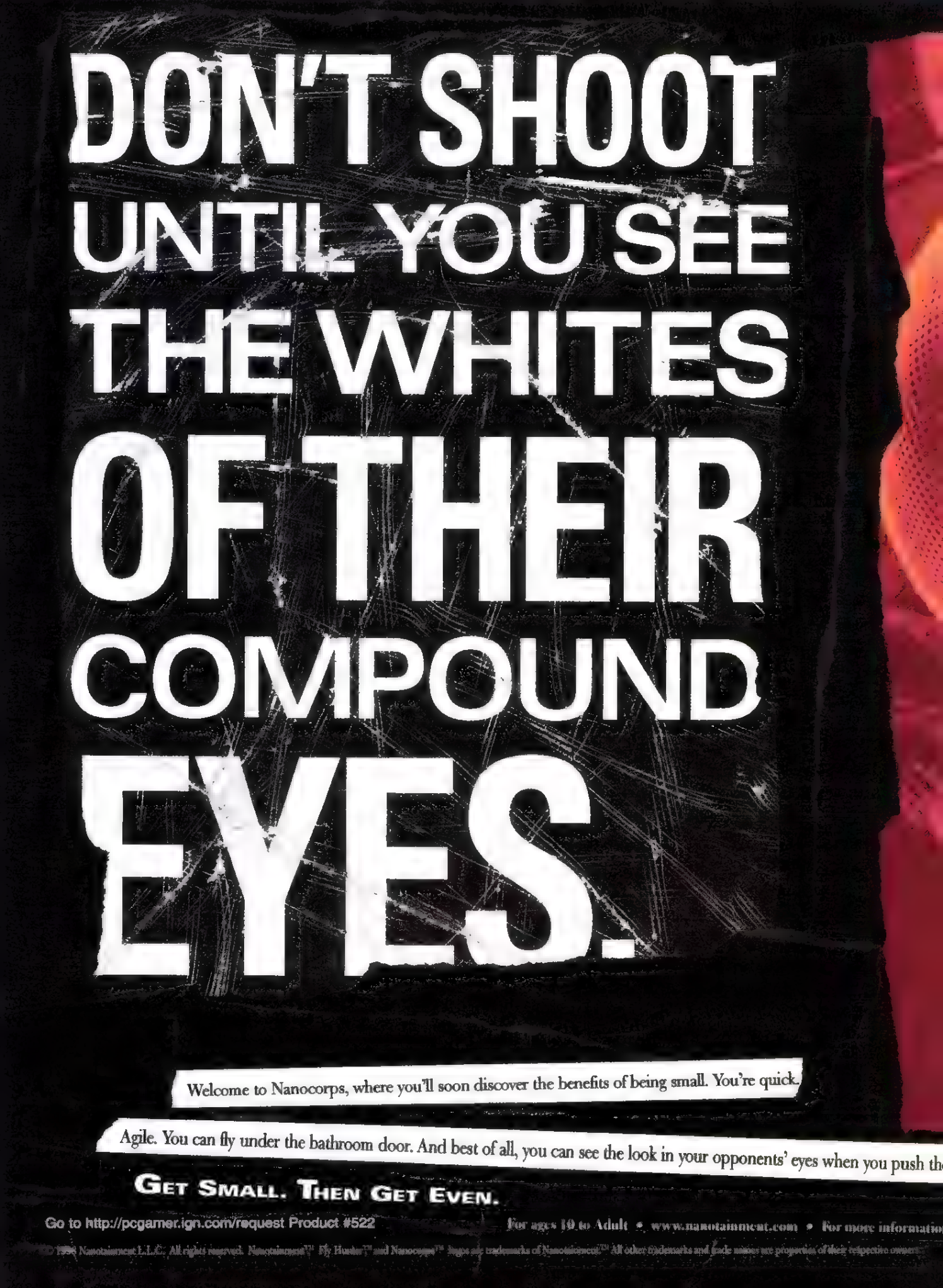
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Too Much of a Good Thing

As I write this, the holiday season has just begun — as you read it, it will have just ended. It's brought so many first-person shooters to choose from, but there's so little time to play them.

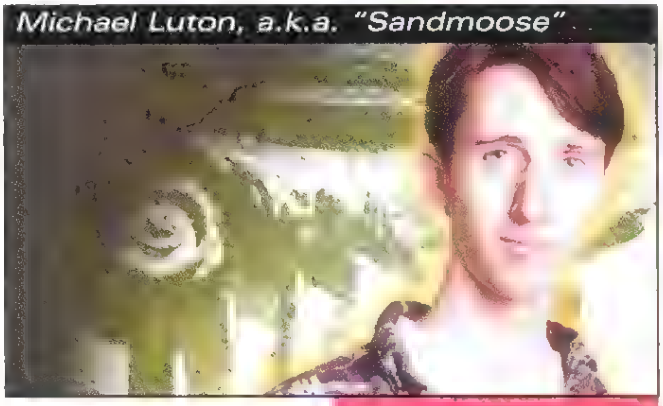
Why do they all have to be released within the same three months? Months and months have passed without a worthy game, and then all at once we're bombarded with first person shooters! The good thing is that most of them look like high-quality games. The bad thing is that I barely have enough time to play through all the single player games, let alone spend any time in multi player deathmatches.

Let me explain my position in a little more detail. When I play a first person shooter in single-player mode, I don't just blow through it once and then forget about it. I play through each game at least three times (once for each difficulty setting). The first time through, on the easy setting, is for getting through the game as fast as I can. It's new and exciting, and every level, monster, and scripted sequence is a first-time experience. A healthy amount of time is spent figuring out puzzles and which weapons work best against the various bad guys.

The second time through is played on the normal difficulty setting. Since I already know the critical path through the levels and where all the bad guys will appear, I spend more time exploring the environments, looking for secret areas. I take a leisurely stroll through each level, checking out every nook and cranny for hidden items and passageways that can be easily missed the first time.

The second time through a game is usually the most enjoyable for me.

The third run-through, played on the hard difficulty setting, is how any game should really be played. No more messing around, trying to figure out puzzles or gawking at the pretty scenery. It's time to kick ass and not even bother taking names. The bad guys are tougher, and there are usually more of them. Health and ammo are less abundant, so I have to be smart about not taking damage and making sure every bullet, rocket, or rail slug counts. Only when I've played all the way through a game on the hardest difficulty setting do I consider it truly beaten. Then I can go online and perfect my deathmatch skills while waiting for the next game to come along.


Michael Luton, a.k.a. "Sandmoose"

But now, with new games being released so fast and furious, this system has begun to break down. It all started innocently enough, with *Rainbow Six* in September. The first time through was easy enough, but I was sweating to beat it on "Elite" mode before we got our copy of *Shogo Mobile Armor Division* in early October. I had to put off installing *Shogo* for a few days while I finished up *Rainbow Six*. *Shogo* was a lot fun, but also very short, and the enemy AI in the original, shipping version just wasn't up to par. So I decided to put off playing through it again until Monolith released a patch.

That was no problem, because *Klingon Honor Guard* had just come into the office. I fired it up and quickly found myself wishing there was something else to divert my attention away from that tortuous and monotonous game. Well, my wishes were answered when a bunch of *Trespasser* boxes showed up a couple of days later. I was halfway through *Trespasser* when *Sin* came out, so I had to bide my time and spend a couple more days getting Minnie Driver off of Site B before getting into *Sin*.

After playing through *Sin* once, I came to the conclusion that it had too many major bugs to justify playing again until it was patched. So now I have both *Shogo* and *Sin* on the back burner, waiting for patches, and *Klingon Honor Guard* waiting for me to dredge up the motivation to finish it just once. Fortunately, I didn't have the chance to get bored, because we just received copies of both *Blood II* and *Half-Life*. Hmm. Now, for the first time, I had to make a decision about which game to play first. It was a tough decision, but I decided to go with *Half Life* and put off *Blood II* until later.

So *Half-Life* is what I'm currently playing now. After I finish it, I intend to move onto *Blood II*, but I'm afraid by that time either *Requiem: Avenging Angel* or *Turok 2: Seeds of Evil* will be dangled in front of my nose. With all of these first-person shooters to play, when am I ever going to have time to play *MotoRacer 2*, *Rogue Squadron*, or *Myth II* — or any of the other non-shooter games I'm looking forward to?

Lord knows if I'll ever have time to play any of these games in multi player mode. And speaking of multi player, most people I know like to pick one game and become an expert at that rather than be mediocre at many. Limited hard-drive space and bloated software is another important consideration; *Half Life* chews up more than 400MB, and *Sin* is worse. In the end, most people will only have enough free space to keep one or two games on their hard drive for the long haul. So which ones do you choose?

The unfortunate side effect of so many good games coming out at the same time is that a few good games will fall by the wayside in the face of such intense competition. I understand that publishers want to have new products on the shelf in time for the holiday buying rush, but I think some of these games might fare better if they were released in months when there's not a lot of other activity in the genre. Most of the first person shooters this Christmas look like very good games, but some may not get the attention they deserve.

PCG

The holiday season brought a whole slew of good shooters, but who has the time — and the hard-drive space — to enjoy them?

Too Much Good Stuff

I hate the holidays. Not in the Scrooge, bah humbug way of hating the actual holidays in and of themselves, but rather I hate what the holidays bring. Never mind the endless traffic, ceaseless rain, and enough decorations and Christmas music to make a sane person reel in a mindless stupor, but this is the time of year that the gaming industry booms more than any other. Games are coming out of the woodwork, and titles we've been waiting for all year are seeing the light of day. Normally that's great, but when they all come out *at the same time*, it's enough to make any gamer crazy in the head.

Okay, okay, maybe I'm whining about nothing. Okay, of course I am. Who wouldn't be overjoyed about all this fantastic gaming goodness? What's driving me crazy is the fact that there are only 24 hours in any given day. Between working on *PC Gamer*'s CD, completing various projects for the magazine, and trying to maintain some sort of life, it's tough to find the 15 to 20 hours a day I'd like to spend playing some of the games that came in during the holiday boom. *Fallout 2*, *EverQuest* (in beta test as I write this), *The Elder Scrolls Adventures: Redguard*, *Quest for Glory V: Dragonfire* (an early beta, but I still want to try it), and *Half-Life* are only a few of the games that demand my attention and get so little of it. (Yes, I know that last one is an action game rather than an RPG or adventure, but hey, I can branch out, can't I?)

And in the near future, we'll have *Baldur's Gate*, *Infinite Worlds*, *Might and Magic VII*, *Planescape Torment*, *Revenant*, *Return to Krondor*, *Swords and Sorcery*, *Lands of Lore III*, *Ultima Ascension*, and of course the online RPG *Asheron's Call*, to name just a few. Some of these are going to be out in several months, but *Baldur's Gate* is very near completion, and so is *Swords and Sorcery*. There's just too much good stuff!

Of course, complaining about having too many games to play is like complaining about having too much money — I'm well aware I should be shot for whining about a "problem" like this. But it's horribly difficult to try to get your work done when the final, boxed copy of *Redguard* is sitting ten inches from your hand, and you know you can't pick it up, put the CD in, and start your search for Cyrus' sister until your work is done, or your column written, or whatever.

I could be frolicking with creatures like this in *EverQuest* if I wasn't so busy writing!

But enough of my whining. I want to get to the end of this column so I'll be that much closer to continuing my search for the Garden of Eden Creation Kit.

3D Mania

Last month, we put together a roundup of the latest fantasy roleplaying games coming up in the next few months. We listed twelve total games, four of them being online titles. Did anyone else notice that, with the exception of *Ultima Online* and *Nox*, every game in the list uses 3D acceleration in one way or another?

Obviously, the rush for 3D support has permeated every genre of gaming (except perhaps turn-based strategy games, but just give it time and we'll see a 3D accelerated version of Chess). What's truly remarkable is that each of these games uses 3D in some different way. *Wizardry 8* and *Might and Magic VII* are first-person only games, while *Swords and Sorcery* uses first- and third-person perspectives together. *EverQuest* also uses a mix of first and third-person views, while *Ultima Ascension* is strictly third-person. *Nox* and *Revenant* are third-person games with a stationary camera angle, while *Soulbringer* lets you move the camera around to suit your viewing style. The online RPGs *Middle Earth* and *Asheron's Call* look as if they work similarly to *EverQuest* — you can go first- or third-person and adjust the camera angle as needed.

What amazes me is that games today *have* to have 3D acceleration or they're criticized. The folks over at New World Computing received hundreds of E-mails telling them to add 3D acceleration to *Might and Magic VI*, which resulted in 3D support in *VII*. Was it really needed? No. As a matter of fact, there will even be some colors and effects missed by people playing the 3D accelerated version, although the game will run more smoothly with a 3D card installed. I'm sure the development teams for *Baldur's Gate* and *Fallout 2* have also been told they should have 3D support in their games. What kind of nonsense is this? Next, people will demand that *Heroes of Might and Magic* should support 3Dfx cards, or that *Civilization* should be redone with Direct3D support. Folks, there's a time and place for everything. I say keep 3D in its rightful place — as a tool to enhance certain games, but not as an across-the-board requirement for every new title.

Maybe you agree, maybe you don't. Maybe you're still seething over my complaints of having too many great games to play. Whatever the case, send your thoughts my way at *mwolf@pcgamer.com*, and let me know just what you think sucked about this month's babbling. Meanwhile, I'm going to be making my way from Kelethin to Qeynos for some serious adventuring.

PCG

A downpour of great gaming makes Mike realize there's just not enough time in his day.

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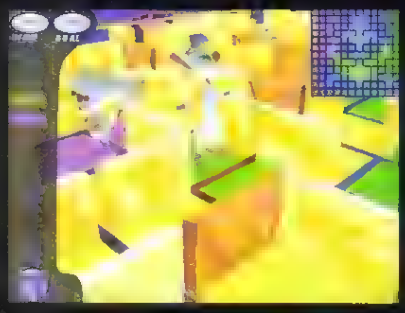

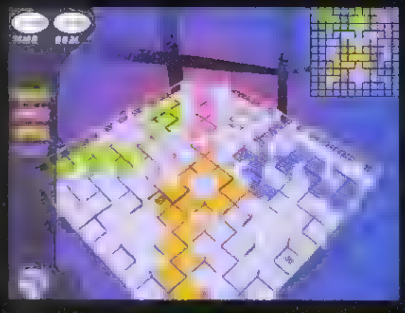

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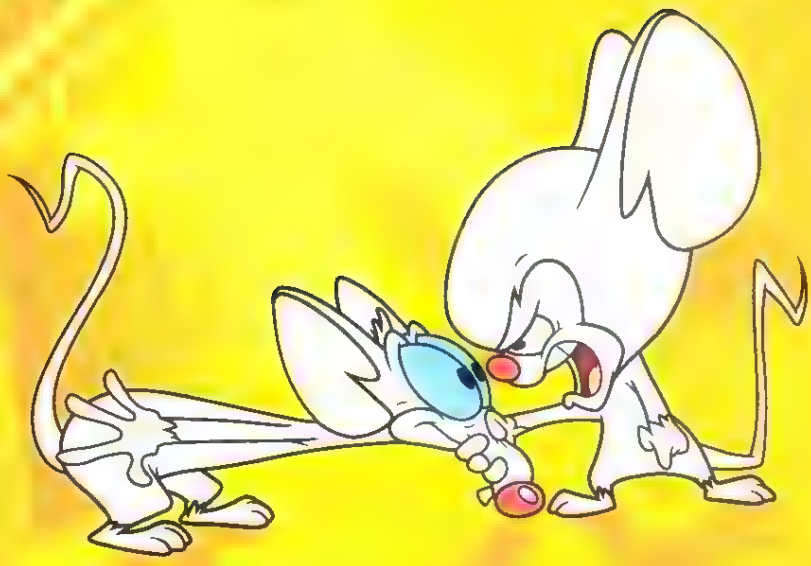

You see Pinky, the plan is to develop a secret hypnotic message that will make humans think I am their almighty ruler, and embed it in an action-packed video game. Naturally we will be the stars. People will play the game by themselves and become horribly addicted. Then they will want to play the game with their friends, and their friends will become addicted. Soon, they will play the game over the Internet, a silly little information infrastructure that humans use to "chat" with each other. Anyway, once we control the Internet, every human being will bow down before me, their rightful master. And by the turn of the new millenium,

the world will be ours!

World Conquest

STUDIOS

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Ancient Wisdom

"Rustam began the day by putting on two pieces of armor and a helmet. He took his weapons and ordered his horse to be saddled. He said:

Tomorrow we shall crush them to pieces.' A nearby man added, 'God willing.' But Rustam scowled and said, 'Even if He is not willing!'

—Rustam, Yezgadird III, king of the Sassanian army, on the eve of the Battle of Al-Qyadisyyah, 637 AD from the September issue of Slingshot Official Journal of the Society of Ancients.

One of the most gratifying things about writing this column is the serendipitous contacts I make from time to time with wargamers who are thoughtful enough to pass on interesting tidbits of information. Shortly after my piece on the two battles of Falkirk appeared, a Canadian gentleman (whose forgiveness I beg — I *would* like to thank him personally, but the E-mail containing his name has vanished), took note of my confession that I knew much less about barbaric and medieval warfare than I do about 19th and 20th Century conflict. He suggested I might kindle a new interest in those eras, and learn a lot about them, by subscribing to a British publication named *Slingshot: Official Journal of the Society of Ancients*. A complimentary copy of this handsome journal soon arrived, and I want to share my enthusiasm for it.

The contents are somewhat slanted toward tabletop miniatures gaming, but there's plenty of material in its pages that will fascinate and educate the wargamers who read this column. Leading the list is a discussion of the distinction between "tactics" and "strategy" (by Thomas Coveny) that is one of the clearest and most succinct discussions of this nebulous topic I have ever read (and God knows I've read hundreds of such pieces over the years).

Equally fascinating is Karl Heinz Ranitzsch's essay on strategy in the Indonesian archipelago before and during the glory days of the Khmer Empire. *This*, my friends, is a prodigy of research about an exotic time and place. After I finished reading it, I thought "What a hell of a strategy game you could make out of this material!"

There's an on-going series of essays on wargame design that's every bit as applicable to PC gaming as to any other format. Author Bob O'Brien cuts through a lot of b.s. and offers sound advice for anyone writing a rule book or a manual: "1. Avoid rules with long and numerous tables — this always seems to be an attempt to establish a spurious accuracy by deluging one with factors. 2. Avoid any calculations involving more than straight plus or minus — you don't really need to be working out percentages of percentages of the number of archers you first thought of every move; 3. Be suspicious of convoluted English, not matter how academically correct — often the same thing can be said with more but simpler words and probably without taking up more space." Amen to that.

Most impressive (where does author Paul Walsh find the time to compile this stuff?) is a monthly column listing, by period, all known articles on ancient and medieval warfare published in the western world. I counted 78 entries, including pieces from such esoteric sources as The University of Tel Aviv Archaeological Journal. Book and game reviews (including PC games!) are well written and sometimes almost incredibly exotic, such as a two-volume history of the Armies of Bactria, 700BC-450BC, by one Valerii Nikimorov, and a new English translation of *100 Strategies of War* by Wang Xuanming (published in Singapore).

A helpful reader puts the General on the track of a magazine that should fascinate fans of games like *Great Battles of Hannibal*.

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Check it out first, if you like. The website is *www.soa.org.uk*, and it's a wargamer's feast. Aside from the usual chat groups, bulletin boards, Play-By-E-Mail contacts, and notices about wargaming club meetings, they run a service called MagWeb. For a modest membership fee, you can download the full text and graphics from 57 periodicals dealing with military history. You will *not* find these on the newsstands, nor in most university libraries. Here's a mouth-watering taste of what's available: *Saga* (devoted to dark ages and medieval warfare); *Abanderado* (specializes in the Spanish Civil War!), *Cry Havoc!* (all periods of warfare, ancient to modern); *Taisho* (Samurais and Japanese feudal conflicts), *Dragoman* (focuses on military events during the Ottoman Empire); *The Seven Years War Association Journal* (The French and Indian War period, 1733-1766); *Valkyrie* (sci-fi/fantasy wargaming).

Non-members may browse at leisure and download a sample article of their choice from any publication. Members, however, gain access to a search engine that permits downloading from MagWeb's entire archive, which, as of June 1998, comprised 7,611 articles! I cannot recommend *Slingshot* too highly.

(Oh, and by the way, Rustam's casual blasphemy evidently didn't sit too well with Allah. After four days of close-fought slaughter, his Arab enemies slew him and routed the Sanassian army, leaving 10,000 of its men rotting in the desert sands.)

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Simaholics Anonymous

Okay, so maybe I'm not crazy after all. After devoting my December column to my long history as a simulation fanatic, I worried that I might have been guilty of providing too much information.

"Great," I thought. "Now everybody thinks I'm insane." And now my expression in the picture on this page — which was intended to convey my earnest dedication to sims, or at least make me look like a nice guy — will probably be interpreted as the piercing gaze of a lunatic. I probably shouldn't have included that bit about driving home a day late for Thanksgiving vacation so I could have a few more hours with *F-19 Stealth Fighter*....

But it turns out I'm not alone. That column sent quite a few long-time gamers into their attics and storage rooms to sift through their own fond memories. Quite a few were kind enough to share 'em with me, and I realized there's a whole crowd of gamers whose devotion to sims matches my own.

At least one reader shares my feelings. Floyd Meyer writes: "Reading your piece reminded me of *Close Encounters of The Third Kind*, when it finally comes to the point in the movie where Richard Dreyfuss realizes he wasn't crazy...and all the odd behavior surrounding him was suffered by a slew of other very normal people."

Floyd's been doing the sim thing even longer than I have; he started with Micro Prose's *Solo Flight*. So has Chris Cook, who signs himself "Long Time Gamer;" his first sim was another Micro Prose classic, *MiG Alley Ace*.

Robert Chirico's been at it a long time, too; he sent a comprehensive chronology of the computers he's owned (starting with a Texas Instruments TI 994A and ending with a 450MHz Pentium II) and the endless succession of games that have compelled him to make upgrade after upgrade. But what really hit home for me was this bit: "In 1994, I went the motherboard/CPU/graphics board route with a 486 66, 1MB video, 14" SuperVGA monitor, and 16MB RAM. I remember the shading on *Jetfighter II* blew me away."

Me, too. I hadn't had a VGA card and monitor for very long when *Jetfighter II* came out, and it was one of the first sims (maybe the very first) to use a kind of dynamic shading that changed depending on the position of the sun. I spent a fair amount of time looking at that sim's external view and doing aileron rolls just to see the light and shadows play across the skin of my YF-23.

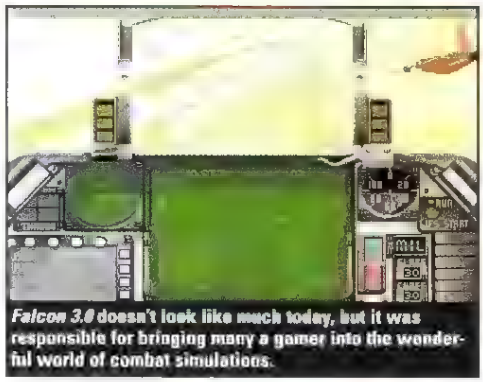
Michael Taylor provided another familiar story revolving around *Project Stealth Fighter* (the Commodore 64 version of *F-19*). "When I first started playing the game, I would set the auto pilot on to go to my first waypoint. ... I would read the manual during these periods, and my dad would ask me if I was really playing the game. I tried to explain to him what was going on, but I don't think he fully understood why I loved the game, or that I really was playing it."

I ran into this same problem recently, when a co-worker noticed me fiddling with the external views in *Total Air War* while I waited for the autopilot to fly me to the next waypoint. "That sure looks like fun," he said, sarcastically. (He's always saying stuff sarcastically. One day I'm going to ask him how he'd like to try being sarcastic to the people at the unemployment office.)

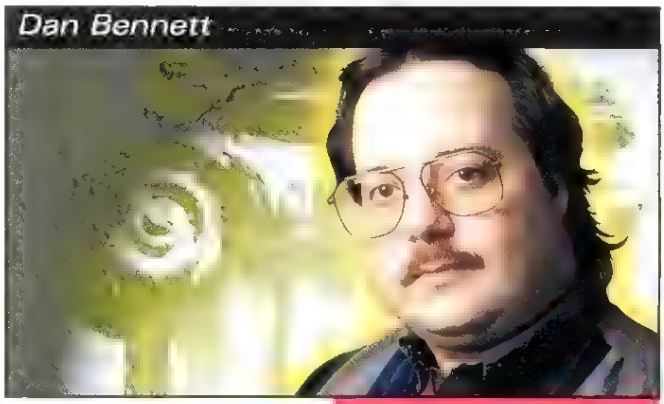
Funny how many common threads there are. Turns out I'm also not the only guy whose obsession with computer games in general and sims in particular has led to a career. Dean Chambers got into the arcane world of networks because he and his brother wanted to play *Falcon 3.0* together. Today, he's a network administrator at SimSystems, a Colorado-based company that makes training sims for the military and commercial markets. Zach Tyre is another net head who says he owes his job to his long-standing obsession with computers and air combat sims. (You younger readers should keep this stuff in mind; next time your parents say you're logging too many hours at the PC, just tell 'em you're preparing for a career. If they have trouble believing that, show 'em this column. And while you're at it, get them to renew your subscription.)

Best of all, it seems the sim fanatic experience is an international phenomenon. Young Vlad Tauber's love for sims began in Romania, where he played a game called *Spitfire* on a Sinclair Spectrum. Today, at age 15, he lives in the U.S. and busies himself with games like *Longbow 2* and *Red Baron 3D*. That's right; not all teenagers are drooling over the latest fighting game for the PlayStation. (And yes, Vlad, Pink Floyd's "Momentary Lapse of Reason" is a very good album.)

So you see, I'm not at all alone in my preoccupation with sims. Gamers of all ages love 'em as much as I do. Which either means I'm perfectly sane, or there are just a lot of lunatics out there. Either way, I figure I'm in good company. PCG



Falcon 3.0 doesn't look like much today, but it was responsible for bringing many a gamer into the wonderful world of combat simulations.



A raft of letters from nostalgic readers convinces Dan he's not the only sim-crazed gamer in the world.

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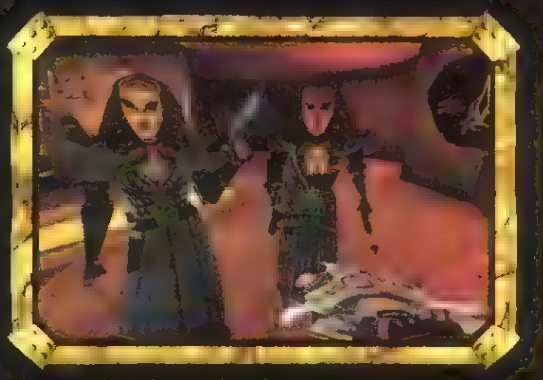

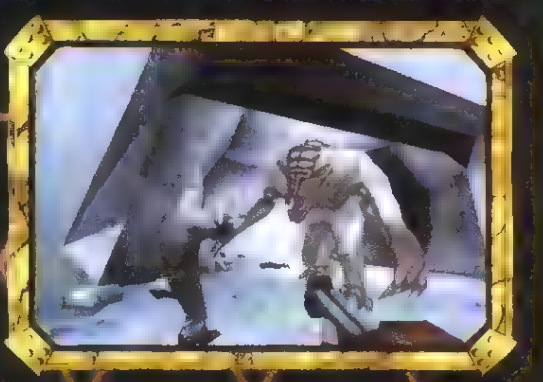

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LETTERS

We've been planning for months to take a group vacation to Aruba to avoid a rainy Northern California winter. But to do that, we've got to put together a Special, All-Letters Edition of *PC Gamer*, and it's starting to look like that's not going to happen because you people aren't holding up your end of the bargain. So please, in the name of all that's holy, send us some letters!

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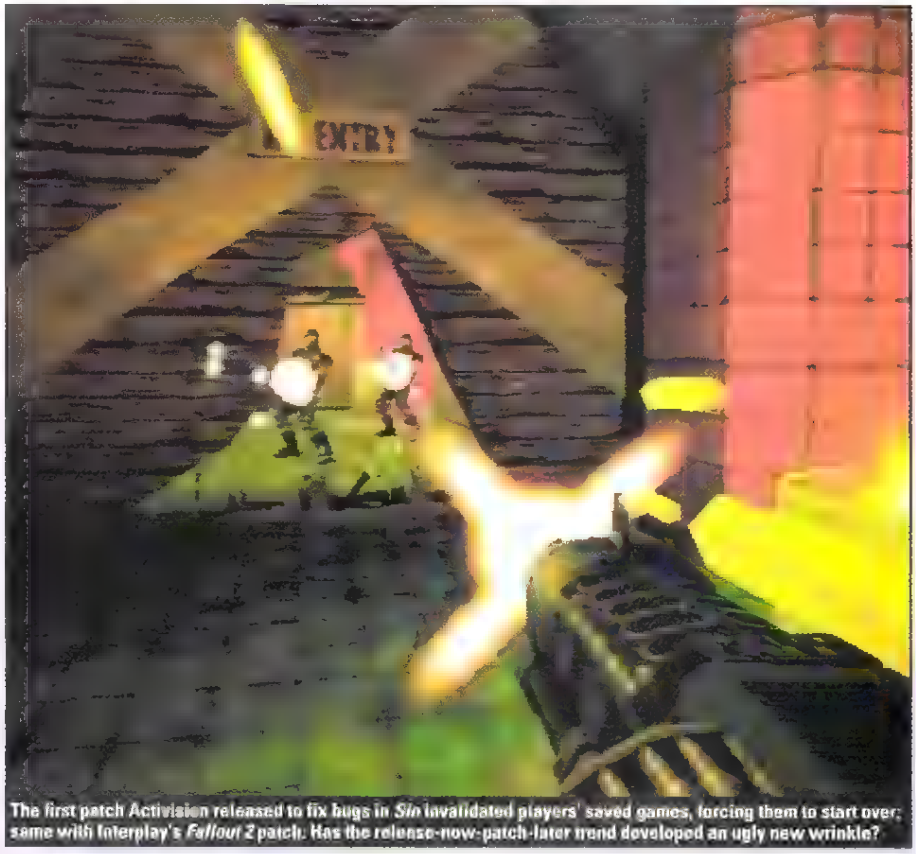

The first patch Activision released to fix bugs in *Sin* invalidated players' saved games, forcing them to start over; same with Interplay's *Fallout 2* patch. Has the release-now-patch-later trend developed an ugly new wrinkle?

Another Convert

I've detected a new trend: the release-the-game-then-patch-it problem. The game companies are releasing buggy software, then releasing a patch to fix the bugs, which also invalidates all your old saved games. It's incredibly frustrating to be three quarters of the way through a game, then find a bug you can't get around — only to find out the patch will fix the bug, but you have to start the game all over again! This has happened to me twice in the last week alone, with *Sin* and *Fallout 2*. Don't these manufacturers realize how frustrating it is for us to have to start over again and again? All I can say to the game companies is this: Don't release a game until it freakin' works, or risk losing customers like me who are tired of being jerked around.

— Laughn Rowe, *via the Internet*

Welcome to the party, Laughn! More and more gamers are letting us know just how irked they are about repeatedly paying good money to act as beta testers for companies that insist on releasing buggy games and fixing them later. Losing hours of progress because a patch makes your saved games incompatible with the fixed game just adds injury to insult. Now might be a good time to repeat these golden rules for game buyers: Until the PC games industry cleans up its act: 1) Don't buy a game from a store that won't let you return it for a refund or exchange it for another game; 2) When you get a game home and find it doesn't work the way it's supposed to, take it back; 3) Don't buy any game as soon as it's released — wait at least a month; 4) While you're waiting to buy that game, check out the reviews it's getting and see what gamers are saying about it online; by the time the waiting period is up, you may have decided not to waste your time and money on it. If enough gamers actually followed these rules consistently, we'd see a real drop in the number of unfinished games being passed off as final product. And wouldn't that be great?

Krusty Keyboard

I'm having a problem that I think only you at *PC Gamer* can solve: when I'm gaming, I get the munchies. My favorite snack food is Cool Ranch-flavored Doritos. I don't know if any of you have ever eaten these delectable delights, but they are downright tasty. The problem is that they get Doritos spices and coloring all over my fingers, which in turn gets on my keyboard. It gets pretty yucky — and then my wife yells at me when she gets Doritos schmooze all over her hands while she's playing *Half-Life*. Do you have any advice on stopping this problem?

— Steve Hoffman, *Raleigh, NC*

Cool Ranch Doritos — the chip that could end a marriage?

This is indeed a serious problem, Steve. Good thing you don't live out here in California, where getting snack-related goop on a jointly owned computer keyboard is grounds for divorce. As it is, we think your wife at least has grounds to smack you up. If you absolutely must eat greasy, spice-encrusted chips while gaming, get yourself a small dog. You can park the little booger on your desk and have it lick your fingers clean between chips. We recommend an Australian Terrier or a Miniature Pinscher. Stay away from Chihuahuas — their constant trembling can distort your monitor's image. Besides, they're just plain creepy.

http://pcgn.com

Sure, *EverQuest* has pretty, 3D-accelerated graphics and tons of different races — but can the new world of Norrath hope to replace *Ultima Online*'s beloved Britannia in the minds of gamers?

Britannia vs. Norrath

I want to thank Mike Wolf for highlight ing the game *EverQuest* in his last cou ple of columns. I have been playing it for a while now, and really like it But I just don't know if it can take the place of *Ultima Online* in my gaming time. I think I will always be a tried-and-true fan of the world of Britannia.

— **Nina Costa,** *via the Internet*

Column Kudos

Thanks for the addition of Rob Smolka's sports column (The Point After) to your magazine. I always thought that *PC Gamer* needed a sports column; Lee Buchanan used to write about some sports games when he was doing The Sim Column, but it never seemed like the right place for sports coverage. My only fear is that the column will turn into an EA Sports press release — I hope Smolka will remember that there are more games in town than the ones from EA

— **Shawn Mullany,** *via the Internet*

So, Mike Luton is writing your action gaming column now, huh? Well, I think that's a good move. I have been reading his online columns for a while now, and think he does a good job. I also found it pleasant that he didn't focus just on *Quake* for his whole column; I hope that's the beginning of a trend. Good job, Mike

— **Simon Seltzer,** *Aurora, CO*

Footman Falling

Have you guys seen those really cool *StarCraft* and *WarCraft* figurines that Blizzard has on sale? I saw them in the store and immediately bought a Human Footman from *WarCraft*. The problem is that the guy won't stay upright! His feet are in an odd position, and any amount of movement makes him fall over. Needless to say, knocking him down has become the favorite game of my cat, Tudor. What can I do?

— **Paul Hudson,** *Lincoln, NE*

The *WarCraft* Footman, one of several very cool figures based on Blizzard games, has one tragic flaw — he can withstand the attacks of the Orcish hordes, but the average domestic cat will knock him on his ass.

First off, Paul, get yourself a cat with a real name, like Mittens or Puff. Or Doug. Then go out and get a hunk of that gummy, pliable plastic stuff you buy when you want to hang a poster without defacing the wall with tape or tacks. Tear off a couple of pea-sized bits, mash 'em onto the soles of your Footman's feet, and stick him to your desk or shelf. That should hold him in place — unless an earthquake comes along, of course. Finally, divide the rest of the stuff into four good-sized blobs, mash 'em onto your cat's feet, and stick him to the ceiling. No reason

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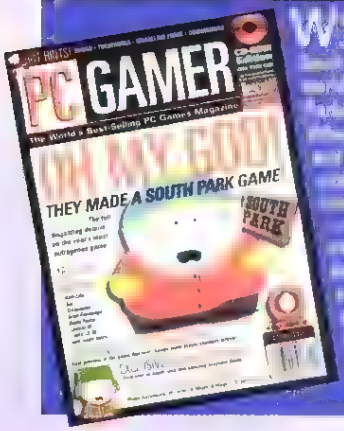
READERS RESPOND TO THE JANUARY 1999 ISSUE



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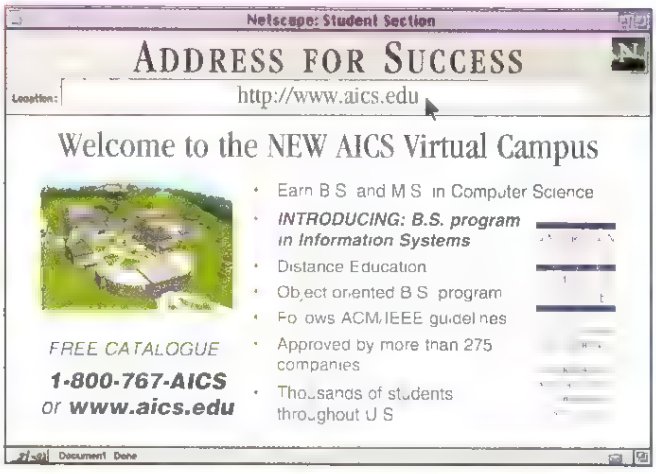

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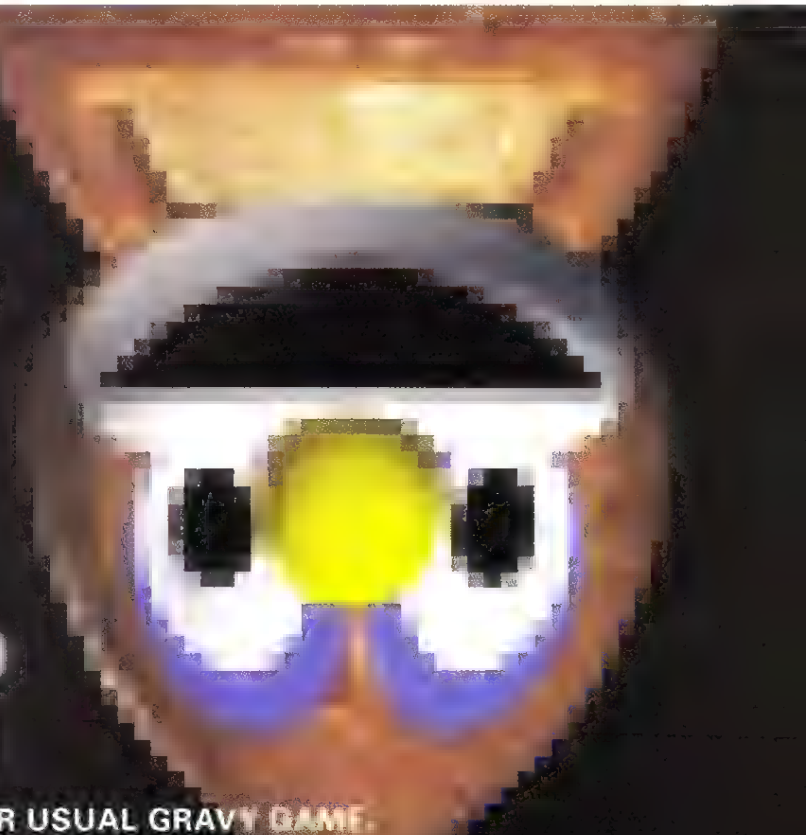

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NEXT TIME...

It's the great circle of life — one issue of *PC Gamer* bites the dust, just as a new one beckons. Here's what we'll have in store for you in just four short weeks from now....

Vol. 6 No. 3 Goes On Sale Feb. 9 Don't Miss It!

The '99 PC Gamer Awards

NO LONGER just a *PC Gamer* tradition, but a staple of the gaming industry calendar! It's once again time for us to dole out our annual awards and celebrate the best in PC gaming. The *PC Gamer* Awards are now in their fifth great year, and next month's special promises to be every bit as surprising, controversial, and enlightening as you've come to expect.

3D Showdown

"WHICH 3D ACCELERATOR CARD SHOULD I BUY?" It's the question we're asked most by readers, so we're going to answer it definitively with the biggest, most comprehensive 3D card comparison ever! We'll be thoroughly testing all the cards and chipsets vying for your cash and give you the no-nonsense answers you need to make the best possible buy.

REVIEWS

All the latest games reviewed and rated, including...

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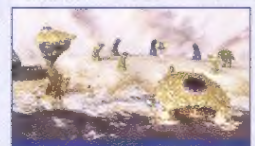
Populous: The Beginning

Return to Krondor

Tomb Raider III

Star Wars: Rogue Squadron

King's Quest: Mask of Eternity

Tom Clancy's Ruthless.com

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Thanks for joining us.

Todd sat in a cramped, coach-class seat on the westbound 747, trying to concentrate on Peter Benchley's latest giant-fish novel. It wasn't easy. And the in-flight movie was out of the question — he loved Carrot Top as much as anyone else, but he'd already seen *Chairman of the Board* seven times.

He sighed. It was going to be a long, boring flight.

That's when it happened: A muffled explosion in one of the jetliner's huge cargo compartments. The sound of grinding metal as the plane's engines inhaled the twisted debris and choked on it. The jet listed sickly to starboard, and its nose dipped toward the earth.

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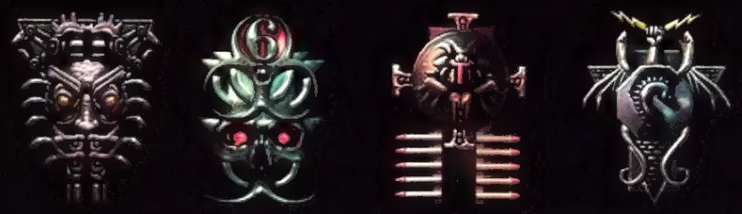

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